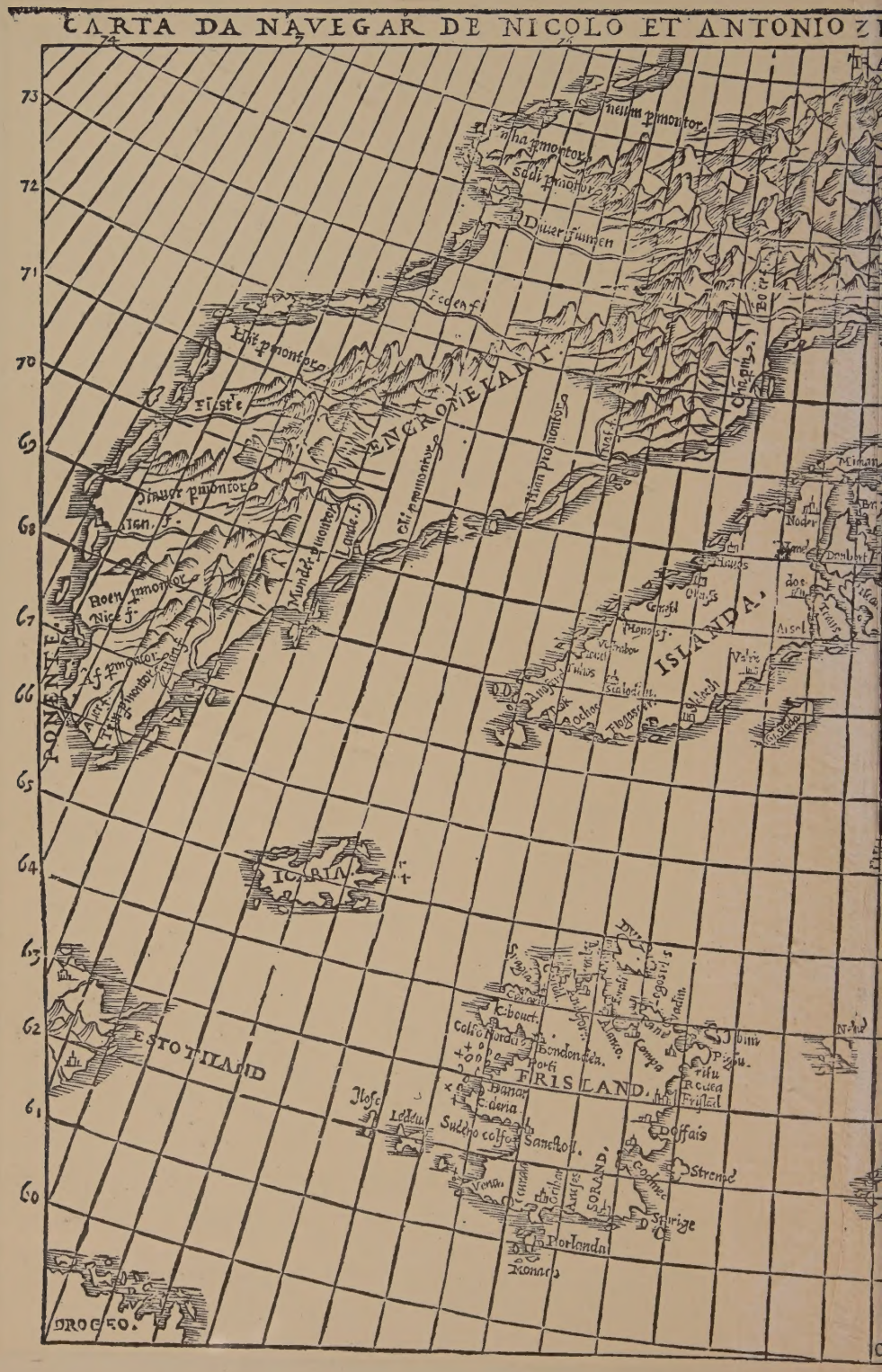
CARTA DA NAVEGAR DE NICOLO ET ANTONIO Z
ISLANDA.
ICARIA
FRISLAND.
ESTOTILAND
PONENTE
GROENLAND
Diuersi fiumen
Hit promontor.
Diuer promontor.
Boeryi promontor.
Nicol.
Mundi promontor.
Laude I.
Ortelius promontor.
Tiuin promontor.
Dorlonda
Iconaco
Sanctoll.
Doffais
Strenæ
Sorand
Sturige
Ioseph
Ledtus
Suduo colfo
Colfo Nordi
Bondon sea.
Porti
Banar
Cederia
Cbourt
Pitsu
Ritu
Reuea
Frisland
Broceo.

TANA
CROLANDIA
S. Thomas.
Zetlandia
Mare et terre incognite.
Tromsø
Tromsø
Pruter
Stopel
Stat.
NORVLGIA
Stefort.
Bergen
Scrueney
SVECIA
LEVANTE
GOCIA.
Londres
Inchfort
Inchford
Brissund
Escalugi
S. Magnus.
Oxford
Aubre
Montrouit
Lancastre
Lopatria
SCOCIA
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AUTOTYPE

THE GOLDEN HIND SERIES

Edited by Milton Waldman

FROBISHER

THE GOLDEN HIND SERIES

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SIR MARTIN FROBISHER
(*From the portrait in the Bodleian Library*)

The Life of Sir Martin Frobisher

By WILLIAM McFEE

NEW YORK
Harper & Brothers Publishers
MCMXXVIII

THE LIFE OF
SIR MARTIN FROBISHER
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I-C

"As concerning ships, it is that which every-one knoweth and can say, they are our weapons, they are our ornaments, they are our strength, they are our pleasures, they are our defense, they are our profit; the subject by them is made rich, the Kingdom through them, strong; the Prince in them is mighty; in a word, by them, in a manner, we live, the Kingdom is, the King reigneth."

"It is my deep conviction, or perhaps I ought to say my deep feeling born from personal experience, that it is not the sea but the ships of the sea that guide and commend that spirit of adventure which some say is the second nature of British men. I don't want to provoke a controversy (for intellectually I am rather a Quietist), but I venture to affirm that the main characteristic of the British men, spread all over the world, is not the spirit of adventure so much as the spirit of service. I think that this could be demonstrated from the history of great voyages and the general activity of the race. That the British man has always liked his service to be adventurous rather than otherwise cannot be denied, for each British man began by being young in his time when all risk has a glamour. Afterward, with the course of years, risk became a part of his daily work; he would have missed it from his side as one misses a loved companion.

"The mere love of adventure is no saving grace. It is no grace at all. It lays a man under no obligation of faithfulness to an idea and even to his own self. Roughly speaking, an adventurer may be expected to have courage, or at any rate may be said to need it. But courage in itself is not an ideal. A successful highwayman showed courage of a sort, and pirate crews have been known to fight with courage or perhaps only with reckless desperation in the manner of cornered rats. There is nothing in the world to prevent a mere lover or pursuer of adventure from running at any moment. There is his own self, his mere taste for excitement, the prospect of some sort of gain, but there is no sort of loyalty to bind him in honour to consistent conduct. I have noticed that the majority of mere lovers of adventure are mightily careful of their skins; and the proof of it is that so many of them manage to keep it whole to

an advanced age. You will find them in mysterious nooks of islands and continents, mostly red-nosed and watery-eyed, and not even amusingly boastful. There is nothing more futile under the sun than a mere adventurer. He might have loved at one time—which would have been a saving grace. I mean loved adventure for itself. But if so, he was bound to lose this grace very soon. Adventure by itself is but a phantom, a dubious shape without a heart. Yes, there is nothing more futile than an adventurer, but nobody can say that the adventurous activities of the British race are stamped with the futility of a chase after mere emotions."

JOSEPH CONRAD

From NOTES ON LIFE AND LETTERS, *pp. 189–190*
Article entitled "Well Done."

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NOTE.—The Borough Map is reproduced by kind permission of the Marquess of Salisbury. The portrait of Sir Martin Frobisher is reproduced by permission of the curator of the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The thanks of the author are due to Webb Waldron, Esq., for permission to reproduce the map of America Settentrionale from his copy of the *Geographico Gregorio*, published at Rome in the seventeenth century. The Harbour of Old Cartagena was found in a brief account of the city published by the Chamber of Commerce of Cartagena.

Thanks and acknowledgments are also due to Gordon Grant, Esq., and to Doubleday, Page & Co., the owners of the copyright, for permission to reproduce Mr. Grant's drawings of the galleon, the caravel and the thirty-two-pounder cannon.

PREFACE

OR various reasons, which I need not enter into here, the subject of this brief book has not been favoured among biographers. Sir Martin Frobisher, Knight, if we except the somewhat bald narratives in Hakluyt's *Voyages,* has been lost to us in the multitude of Elizabethan captains who founded British maritime supremacy.

The intention in this book has been, so far as human frailty permitted, to avoid controversy and partisanship. If I may venture to speak plainly, I have observed in the authors of biographies a tendency to emphasise too strongly the office of special pleader. And so, while keeping Frobisher in the middle of the picture, it has seemed to me that I would do him a grievous disservice were I to magnify him by diminishing figures who are, in my opinion, as great as or greater than he. The book has been written to do justice to the memory of a great sea-captain, and I hope that the partisans of other important men of the period will discover nothing more than justice in the picture.

It will be seen that the book contains few footnotes and no appendices. It seemed to me that a book designed for the general public could contain within its own bounds all that need be said. I have also dispensed with a list of authorities, merely mentioning them in the course of the text. But I should be failing in gratitude if I omitted to stress the value of Sir Julian Corbett's *Drake and the Tudor Navy,* Mr. Miller

Christy's *Silver Map of Drake's Voyage* and Richard Henry Major's commentary upon *The Voyages of the Zeni.* The only other existing life of Frobisher, by Frank Jones, B.A., published fifty years ago, was found to be a cumbersome and inadequate compilation, but it was extremely useful on account of its exhaustive list of original documents in the British Museum and Records Office. In forming an opinion of Queen Elizabeth and estimating her participation in various decisions affecting Frobisher's career, I have used Mr. Frederick Chamberlin's *Private Character of Queen Elizabeth,* without sharing Mr. Chamberlin's undisciplined admiration of the Queen.

W. M.

THE LIFE OF SIR MARTIN FROBISHER

CHAPTER I

YOUNG MARTIN GOES TO LONDON

O WRITE the life of a man of action, who died more than three hundred years ago, leaving but scanty memorials of himself, his thoughts, and his development, is something of an adventure for the biographer. Knowledge is but a small part of the equipment needful if a true picture of the hero is to emerge. Such characters, imbedded in the histories of their nation, are like gems discovered in long-buried sword-hilts and cannot be removed from their rough and tarnished settings. Only imagination can restore them to our eyes, to some degree, as what they once were, in those days. And to aid us further we may sometimes discover within ourselves that comprehension of distant passions and ambitions which is the heritage of an ancient and homogeneous race.

Modern man is apt to regard the mediæval era with some commiseration on account of the many erroneous notions and superstitions which, modern man believes, held the human mind in those days locked in iron formulas. But it may be doubted whether any mediæval looked upon himself half so sentimentally as do our modern folk in relation to the great movements of the past. We feed ourselves very largely upon fallacies, and what we call our national character is often no more than a fanciful misconception. We participate in our national characters, it is true; but we know not how far

we are actually of the blood and bone and sinew of our forefathers until we are tried and tested in some such ordeals as they were accustomed to endure.

And in no case is this weakness for fallacies, amiable misunderstandings of history, so plain to our eyes as in our cult of the sea and seamen. The mediæval maps of the watery globe were no more fantastic than our modern conceptions of the adventurous spirit animating those who go out into the dark places of the earth. We have very little knowledge of the spiritual equipment of the seamen of our own time, and even less of those silent navigators who laid the foundation of modern maritime commerce. We are in the habit of flattering ourselves that we have in our veins the blood of the old vikings; but it may be doubted whether any faculty is so generally distributed throughout the world as is that of going to sea. The history of other nations upon the ocean we are apt easily enough to forget, and it is convenient to ignore that long period in English history when the Island Race was very insular indeed, and Englishmen were unknown on any waters save those close inshore at home.

Towards the beginning of the sixteenth century a change was perceptible in the habits of the people, arising out of the break-up of the religious houses and the increase of sheep-farming. Woolen cloth, for export, was being manufactured all over the country, and the improving highways over which the pack-animals travelled were being used by thousands of unemployed ploughmen and other farm laborers thrown out of work when the fields were put under grass. The new class of landowners, sharp peasants and yeomen who had the knack of seeing where money could be made, were also on the move toward the seaports. Travel became more familiar to the members of inland communities, and travellers' tales were full of relayed excitement

going on in foreign parts, new lands discovered, old dangers circumvented, and fabled riches found to be no fables at all, but stark realities beyond the horizon.

And it should be noted that about this time England, unlike Europe, had peace at home. The invading Scots were defeated on the border and their king slain. The French were beaten at Guinegatte. The haughty Hapsburgs, Spanish and German, who between them dominated most of Christian Europe, turned uneasily toward the island beyond those stormy northern seas, uncomprehending as ever of the stupendous achievements of the coming years. Humbler folk not only turned to think of England, but braved the narrow seas and humid airs, and found a rough but genuine welcome there—cloth-weavers and craftsmen, leather-faced, black-eyed mariners from the Mediterranean, men with strange maps in their baggage and disturbing tongues in their heads. The poor, the bold, and the greedy, afoot in England with a vague notion of soldiering in Germany or the Low Countries, began to hear of more distant regions where a man could have gold and slaves for the taking and so come home and buy him an abbey farm or a decent tavern and set up as an honest burgess.

And King Harry, who did big things in a big way, was building ships of war, and work was to be had down in Kent, at Chatham and Deptford, on the Medway.

It was natural that in this time of awakening in England, when the new long ships of King Harry's navy were being talked of in waterside inns, and this new trick of tacking, whereby a man could sail his boat against the wind, that the West-countrymen should take the lead. Even in that day of slow travel Devon, Cornwall, and Somerset were impregnated with sight and sound of the sea. The fishermen were a hard, experienced race. The winds and currents of the Bristol Channel and around the Scilly Isles made for good seamanship.

The people cared little for the Beauforts, the great ruling family of the West, and less for the citizenry of London. Bristol was their capital, whence Cabot had sailed for Labrador. From Bristol came coasting ships to Thames, and out of London River sailed merchantmen to Portugal and Spain, manned mostly by West-countrymen, resolute, daring seamen, who could be trusted to go a little farther than the next, to fetch a cargo home. Their ships were small and they sailed mostly in fleets, but they had strong hearts, cool heads, and loud, roaring voices. They looked men boldly in the eyes when they came ashore, judging them by stern elemental standards, rather scornful than otherwise of the laws made year by year to hamper free trade and merchant-venturing, and doing by foreign ships as they had been done by, according to the code of the sea.

And already, so admirably was it designed for absorbing the difficult and unruly boys who hated, by a sort of instinct, the uncongenial and interminable labour of country life, there were boys on board those ships. They were not escaping toil, of course, and it is to be borne in mind that men—and boys—rarely have a clear vision of what they want to do. It is much more reasonable to suppose that men and boys were then very much as they are now. Shaken to and fro by natural aptitude and worldly circumstances, they settled at last into a way of life which they had only dimly sought or foreseen. Here and there among them we might have found one with the clear-cut, irresistible vocation, the born soldier or sailor. In the raw material of the English sea-going community of those days we should have found wastrels and farmers, lazy clerks and penniless journeymen fond of the bottle, strong rogues and masterless men, as well as authentic adventurers for whom their native island was grown too small. The merchandising families, discovering in their midst some

graceless lout who would neither learn his declensions nor sit on a counting-house stool, would discuss the situation with some hoarse-voiced, purple-visaged commander just in from Guinea, and another young gentleman would go out to see the world from the waist of a cranky carack.

This was the manner of Martin Frobisher's indenturing, a tall, strong lad from the Yorkshire dales, a stranger among the salty West-countrymen and earringed ship-men from the Thames Estuary. He was sent to sea because they could do nothing with him ashore. At sea he remained for forty years, with scarcely any rest, and in action he died.

The Frobishers, so far as we are able to discover, had no embarrassing particularity concerning the spelling of their name. As with Shakespeare, we are offered a number of alternatives. But the Frobishers were of Welsh origin. They had come out of Chirk, in Owen Glendower's country, to settle in Yorkshire, about 1350, and they called themselves Furbisher, Furbiser, and even Ffourbyssher, depending upon the taste and fancy of the speller. Martin himself, as will be noted later on in this book, was not the man to settle a question of this sort. In 1572, when he was about thirty-four years old, he made a declaration before the Queen's commissioners concerning his dealings with the Earl of Desmond, and he gave his name as Martyn Ffurbussher. Twenty years later Her Majesty writes to her "trustee and well beloved Sir Martin Furbissher." In the same year, however, Martin signed himself "Froobiser," and while this may have been merely the hurried scrawl of an illiterate man half demented with the agony of a mortifying wound, it proves that during the Elizabethan era even a celebrated admiral did not insist on exactitude in the writing of his name.

But no matter how neglectful they might be in this

small detail, the Frobishers were of an aggressive and getting-ahead character. It has been written of them that "the art of marrying well was one of their accomplishments," surely the most remarkable of talents, and one that was apparently handed down from father to son. In Yorkshire they lived in and about Altofts, near Normanton, where a sparse population lived rurally and unsuspecting, above enormous beds of coal. Here young Martin was born, about 1538, of good family if not actually county folk. His uncle was mayor and recorder of Doncaster. He was the fourth child and the youngest son.

None of these advantages was of immediate use to Martin. He was probably big for his age, for we know he became a man of large frame, with the muscular strength to pick up a man bodily and fling him from the deck of his ship into the sea. But there was no school near Altofts to which he could go. The suppression of monasteries and the confiscation of abbey lands had just been accomplished. Monks were not likely to go on teaching the sons of the very men who were buying from the crown the ancient heritage of the religious orders. Schools fell into decay throughout the land. Bishop Latimer, preaching at this very time, proclaimed the evil.

"Schools are not maintained," he declared. "Scholars have not exhibition. . . . Men provide lands and riches for their children, but this most necessary office they for the most part neglect. . . ."

And so Martin, as anyone can believe who has read the few documents he wrote with his own hand, had very little education. His mother, of the rising family of Yorke, decided to send him to her brother, Sir John Yorke, who was then pushing his own fortunes in London. The Yorke family were evidently of the same progressive type as the Frobishers, for we find them, a

hundred years or more later, in a position to purchase Fountains Abbey itself from the Armytages, a property they still hold. To Sir John, living in the thick of exciting events in London, came young Martin to make a start in life.

It would be, perhaps, one of the most interesting and valuable historical documents in the world, a record of a youth's journey on horseback from Yorkshire to London in 1549 or thereabouts. Henry the Eighth had sunk into his last torpor two years before, a vast mass of disease and putrefaction sustained only by a terrifying ego-mania which, curiously enough, had failed to alienate the affection of the people. Edward the Sixth was now eleven years old and the politicians were fighting the bishops for control of the government. The great families, who had destroyed one another in the Wars of the Roses, much to the edification of the Tudor monarchy, were now represented by unscrupulous and incompetent peers like Northumberland and Seymour. The whole country was in an uproar over religion in a way we of the twentieth century can scarcely envisage to ourselves. Lord Protector Somerset, who had made a huge fortune for himself and enabled others to do the same by the confiscation of the guilds, chantries, and other religious resources, had decided that more liberal legislation would permit Protestants and Catholics to live together. No sooner were the laws repealed, however, than trouble began. Fanatical preachers and expropriated priests led crowds whose real trouble was not the state of their souls, but the desperate poverty of their families. The debasement of the coinage of Henry the Eighth, the lowering of the purchasing value of money by the enormous influx into Europe of shiploads of gold from the New World, the wholesale inclosing of farms for sheep-raising to provide wool for the looms, had brought the English common people to

a most miserable condition. As Martin Frobisher rode to London the men of Norfolk rose under a leader named Kett and captured the great city of Norwich, smashing the enclosures and destroying thousands of the sheep fattening on the land. And when he reached the capital he was no doubt a silent but attentive listener as his uncle cautiously discussed the overthrow of the weak liberal government of Lord Somerset and the rise to power of the cunning and dangerous Duke of Northumberland.

Those were stirring times to live in London for a boy of great spirit and bold courage and natural hardness of body, and it might easily happen that a youth of such character and temperament would show no great love for schooling, now that he had it. What kind of man Sir John Yorke was we are not informed by the chronicles, but with his own fortunes afloat, with such perplexing political winds blowing, the knight probably had little time or patience for Martin, whose father had died when he was four or five years old and who had no patrimony.

This much we may assume: Sir John had friends among the merchant-adventurers who used London River. These men, who had no tradition to speak of behind them, without either the hampering prestige of a great service or the prejudices of an exclusive craft, were wont to esteem recruits on their merits. The fact that Martin was a poor scholar and did not take kindly to court or counting-house, would be no bar to their favour. One of them, Master John Lock, was sailing with a fleet of merchantmen, bound for West Africa. It was a long voyage, as voyages went in those days, for it was only sixty years since the discovery of America, and Martin, so far as we know, raised no objection. He shipped on one of these vessels, in the

year 1554, and the die was cast. Martin Frobisher, scarcely fifteen years old, had found his vocation.

It may well be asked, at this point, in what kind of ship did our hero first serve? Perhaps it would be well to mention a few of the types then building.

It was a period of transition. The round ships were being ousted by the new long type and no doubt old seamen were grumbling about it as shell-backs grumbled at the smoke of steamers and shook their heads over the change from iron hulls to steel. In 1554 the prevailing designs were caravels, galleons, hoys, hulks, and cromsters. The caravel was a round ship of moderate size but not too round. Moreover, she had a less clumsy appearance. The Portuguese in their long voyages of discovery, Columbus on his famous westward passage to the West Indies, used caravels. They were, according to M. August Jal, the great authority on ancient naval architecture, "more graceful in shape than their contemporaries, the nefs, and having narrower quarters. Also they were faster sailors, more able, and were better fitted for all enterprises demanding speed and rapid maneuvering."

Such vessels as Captain Lock took out to Guinea that year in his successful attempt to inaugurate a trade in gold and ivory were probably caravels carrying a square sail with one or more lateen-rigged mizzens and displacing fifty or sixty tons. Such a craft, honestly built, could go anywhere and defend herself against anything afloat save a ship of the line. Indeed, a good skipper, acquainted with his ship and his crew, often did not hesitate to tackle galleons, if the wind served. His small demi-culverins could smash ugly holes in some wall-sided Spaniard whose heavy guns could only fire through the topsails of her enemy.

And out of old Thames went young Martin, glad to be away. Queen Mary had declared that she would

marry the king of Spain, and the minds of Englishmen were disturbed by the thought of their country being towed like a cockboat in the wake of the Spanish galleon. Wyatt and his men had marched up from Kent, fighting from Charing Cross to Ludgate, only to be overpowered by the queen's partisans. Wyatt, like Somerset, was a poor politician, and poor politicians in the sixteenth century generally went down the river to that sombre four-square emblem of centralized authority, the Tower. The Tower was also an emblem of England—it was easier to get in than to make your way out. Into it went Sir Thomas Wyatt, leader of a lost cause, and past it floated about the same time the little company of caravels bound for Africa.

It is disappointing that for ten long years after this, while Europe as well as England was in a great ferment of change, we know nothing of Frobisher's life at sea or ashore. But we are well within our rights if we figure him following his chosen calling steadily, voyage after voyage. The Mediterranean was opening to English bottoms and rich freights were being offered for the transport of Oriental cargoes from Alexandria to Venice and Genoa, from Constantinople to the Low Countries. Still more probable is it that he made a voyage or two to Muscovy and forgathered with navigators who had strong opinions about the northern routes to China. We can only surmise, but the subsequent career of Frobisher, the invincible tenacity with which he held upon a certain course, justifies our contention that in those years of obscurity as mariner, master, and freebooter, the conception of doubling the American Continent to the northward became the obsession of his life.

CHAPTER II

A SEA CARDE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

HE science of cartography in the early years of Queen Elizabeth's long reign was neither accurate nor organised. Those seamen, whose natural bent was navigation as distinct from trade and piracy, whose minds stored up extensive and peculiar knowledge of winds and currents, who set down, as accurately as they knew how, the latitudes of the various headlands they sighted, and who were noting, in some perplexity, the variation of the magnetic needle in different areas of the ocean, had no inducement to offer their own special knowledge to the public. Those who were likely to benefit by such publicity were competitors and rivals; the rest of the world was not yet ready to reward the scientific investigator.

Nevertheless, something did get done in this way and spread among the brethren of the craft. It would soon become worth while to the merchants of such enterprises as the Muscovy Company and the Levant Company that their captains should have accessible all possible information on such charts as they used. So came into use what was known as a "sea carde," a sheet of sheepskin stretched flat and smooth, with a few definitely known coasts outlined in ink and a scale of latitudes laid across. On this the navigator would lay out his course with the lands he raised, many of them

imaginary, no doubt, and corrected as his voyage progressed. True enough of those early days are Kipling's shrewdly imaginative lines:

> Beyond all outer charting
> We sailed where none have sailed;
> We've seen the landlights burning
> On islands none have hailed.
> Our hair stood up for wonder
> And when the night was done
> There danced the deep to windward
> Blue-empty, 'neath the sun.

Those who not only went to sea, but speculated upon the problems of geography, turning ever again to the old records for hints and corroboration of their own groping theories, must have been in deep travail of soul during those years when Frobisher was working his way up to the command of a privateer. It was probably at this time that he first met William Burrough, mentioned in the chronicles as "Frobisher's manne Borrowes." Burrough was about Frobisher's age, and worked up to a command in the Muscovy Company which traded with northern Russia. There is a sound human reason why Frobisher should take up with Burrough even though the latter was a Devonshire man. Burrough was a clear-headed, articulate person, with a knowledge of map-making and the ability to write out what he knew. Men like Frobisher, with great spirit and energy and initiative, instinctively turn to a man of such a type to formulate their technical difficulties and express for them the solutions. It is quite unlikely that Frobisher disparaged men like Burrough and Best, who wrote the clearest account of the northwestern voyages. But he knew himself as in-

capable of their work as were they of taking his place as the leader.

We are fortunate to have one of Burrough's "sea-cardes" exactly as Frobisher left it. It is in the possession of the Marquess of Salisbury and is endorsed on the back in the handwriting of Lord Burleigh, to whom either Frobisher or the Queen gave it as a record of the first voyage to seek the Northwest Passage to Asia. It is a skin thirty-three inches and a half by twenty-seven inches. The inscription in a very small hand on the right-hand bottom corner is "The first of June 1576. By W. Borough."

But the interesting feature of this little-known explorer's chart is that it was based upon the celebrated Zeno chart, often supposed to be a forgery, which was first published when Frobisher had been at sea four years and when he was, consequently, about twenty years old and beginning to nurse those grandiose ideas of discovery which ultimately brought him fame and fortune.

In 1558 a small volume, published at Venice, which was at that period one of the greatest maritime cities of the world, claimed that America had been discovered by two Venetian brothers, Nicolo and Antonio Zeno, during the fourteenth century. Their descendent, another Nicolo, declared that his book was a compilation from the remains of old family documents discovered by himself in his house, and included a remarkable chart of the northern seas on which were many islands and continents never before heard of and never since seen.

It may be imagined what a hob was raised among navigators of all nations when this book with its chart began to circulate. What arguments in tavern parlors when a shipmaster, just in from the Adriatic, produced his copy of the Zeno exploits! A hundred and fifty

years before those two Venetians had got across to what they called Estotiland and Drogeo, in what is now Labrador! To the chart again. Here was Scocia, which is Scotland. North of it the Zenos found what they called Estland, an island as large as Scotland. Southwest of Estland were two small islands, Neome and Podanda. Due west again was a vast island they called Friseland. North of that was Icaria, and north again was the huge mass of Engroneland or Greenland.

Now there was nothing fundamentally improbable in all this. The Venetians had been known since the thirteenth century as bold seamen and indomitable traders, and the Zenos might well have made the voyage claimed. The chart, moreover, was strong evidence to navigators. It had an authentic appearance, even though a man like Burrough, who had been to the White Sea, might look dubiously at the land marked north of Norway. And what man had done man might do again. At the backs of their minds was a profound conviction that if Magellan could pass round America to the southward, there was surely a similar passage whereby the continent could be turned to the northward. Zeno's chart seemed to confirm everything they knew of those waters. A Genoese had reached America from Spain, a Venetian citizen had sailed out of Bristol for Nova Scotia to find new fishing grounds. Why should not another of them go north? Well, argued many a sagacious sea-captain, and how would he get back, supposing he had a fair wind for sailing west? It was in 1539 that Fletcher of Rye, shipwright to Henry the Eighth, first invented the fore-and-aft rig so that a ship could tack against a head wind. Trade winds, they knew, but trade winds did not blow among the icebergs of the north. John Rut had sailed out of Plymouth "to the west for the east" and had turned back because great ice he found frightened him. And

when we remember that John Rut's ship was probably less than forty tons burthen, who will blame him?

But the fact remains that men like Borough and Frobisher and Michael Lock, son of the Admiral Lock with whom Martin first went to sea, accepted the Zeno chart as an authentic record of an ancient voyage. If it was wrong, the only way was to go out and prove it. And modern investigation tends to dismiss the charge of forgery against the Italian who published the chart of his ancestor's voyage. This Italian, Nicolo Zeno, was a member of the Council of Ten in the Republic of Venice and not likely to promulgate a useless falsehood! The errors in the chart are easily accounted for if we bear in mind the difficulties of getting a ship's position in the fourteenth century.

Exploring expeditions, however, cost money. There was no Royal Geographical Society to which to turn, no wealthy newspaper proprietor to subsidise the venture for publicity. It was not even feasible to apply to the great banking firms of the Continent at this time. Messrs. Malvenda, Spinola, Forinano, Doria, Giustiniani, and even the Fuggers of Augsburg were much too deeply involved in the vast military expenditures of the European powers to finance voyages of discovery. The thing to do, if a man had a scheme to find new lands, was to interest some great lord, with influence at court who might bring the matter perchance to the sovereign's attention. He could, if he were a man like Raleigh or Gilbert, go to court himself. This an illiterate sea-captain like Frobisher could not do. He had to acquire influence, and it took him ten years to do it. He achieved great things as an explorer and he became eventually the first naval officer of his time, the trusted admiral of a queen who could read men better than any ruler in the world; but at the time when history next

takes notice of him after he is heard of as going to sea, he is a pirate.

In our time it is difficult to imagine the state of affairs on our coasts in the sixteenth century. England was at that time surrounded by potential enemies. Henry the Eighth had destroyed a fleet of hostile vessels in the Scheldt designed to land an army in England. Mary had fought and lost Calais to the French kingdom. Scotland was an enemy country allied with France. Wales spoke a foreign tongue and even in Cornwall the natives still spoke Celtic. Ireland was an unknown land full of savages. Yet trading by sea went on among all these folk. Most of them were Catholics and bought fish for Fridays. All of them were buyers of English cloth. And among the hoys and hulks which moved from port to port were hardy lawless men who lived by looting the vessels who could not protect themselves. They in turn, if ruined by some such outrage and obtaining no redress from the court, would turn pirates and recoup from others what they had lost.

In time the merchants of London, suffering in their turn, took steps. The arm of the law reached out and the bodies of pirates hung from gibbets on the shore around the coast. In 1575 we read of "The Pirate Hitchcock taken at Yarmouth for spoiling two Scottish ships" who is to be examined.

Not so easy was it to bring to book those who looted a foreign ship. The attitude of the English toward this kind of crime up to the year 1580 seems to have been very much that of an American citizen toward a bootlegger. They disapproved, but bought the goods the pirate carried in. Human nature in such matters is very much the same all over the world and throughout the centuries. The ambassador of His Spanish Majesty, however, was wont to take a serious view

of these affairs. He was not satisfied that those who dealt with pirates should be fined. He was insistent that the rogues themselves should be hung. He provided the Queen's Council with long lists of outrageous assaults upon peaceful merchantmen. Among sixty-one such cases we discover, in 1565:

> "The *Maria,* with a cargo of saffron valued at 4,000 ducats, taken by Captain Sorrey."
>
> "The *Tiger* from Andalusia with cochineal, silk, wool, gold, silver, pearls and precious stones, taken by Captain Corbet and Captain Hewet."
>
> "The *Crow* from Zealand robbed of twenty three last of herring by boars from Foy and Plymouth."
>
> "The *Flying Spirit,* from Andalusia, with a rich cargo of cochineal, was plundered by Martin Frobisher."

It is probable that this case was offset by some reciprocal villainy on the part of an Andalusian skipper, for the state papers make no further allusion to Martin. In 1566, however, some watchful person in Newcastle-on-Tyne reported that Captain Frobisher was fitting out a ship with guns and ammunition. As England was supporting the Netherlands in the struggle against Spain, though nominally at peace herself, the matter was taken up and the Captain was required to answer charges of attempted piracy. This he did in a reasonable manner, explaining that he was planning a voyage to Guinea. He was probably contemplating a trip from Benin with a cargo of negroes to the West Indies, for John Hawkins had shown very plainly that the profits for a bold hard trader were enormous.

To evade suspicion, however, it appears that while Martin was being examined his brother took a load of

coals from Newcastle in the coasting trade. A light, rather more interesting than illuminating, is thrown on Frobisher's movements during these years by an entry in the Chamberlain's Account Book for the Borough of Aldeburgh in Suffolk, where under the year 1569, the town recorded a sum of

> "tenne pounds granted towards the charges for carrying of Captain Fyrbussher and others of his company to Londone by virtue of the Queens Maje'ties proclamacon here stayed and by other ordinary peses (persons) commanded to be sent up as prisoners."
>
> In the same year the Account Book shows that
>
> "John Towers, the gouner [governor] was paid VI^{s}, VIII^{d} [six shillings and eightpence] more for his Rydynge to London with certayne p'sonars. . . ."

Just what bearing this has upon the earlier Newcastle trouble we cannot now say, for Frobisher, like other Elizabethan seamen, was reticent in later life concerning his early career. If, as the chronicles state, Frobisher's brother took the ship in his absence, the Aldeburgh business might have referred to the brother, John or Davy, we know not which. Again it may be that Martin was regularly willing to run the risk of arrest on piracy charges for the sake of the profit, and knowing that the whole business of arrest was "a gesture" to impress the Spanish ambassador.

It has been suggested by enthusiastic admirers of Frobisher that he was at this time engaged in secret attempts to set out in search of the Northwest Passage and that these arrests were in the nature of stupid bureaucratic blundering. It is not explained why his attempts should be secret, nor why, when questioned,

Frobisher should allude vaguely to Guinea and the coal trade. To the present writer it seems obvious that if Frobisher wanted government assistance for his scheme, he wasted a valuable opportunity to push his fortune when carried to London to face the Council.

The fact remains, on consideration, that Captain Frobisher of the Guinea voyages was a pirate and was fairly well known in London as the man responsible for numerous exasperating raids on foreign merchantmen. Nothing probably infuriated the Queen's advisers more than to discover, just when they were completing some astute diplomatic move which would advance English good will at Madrid, that Frobisher had coolly boarded a galleon and carried off a few thousand ducats' worth of cargo. It was not easy to keep such exploits from the ears of the Spanish ambassador's hundreds of spies.

William Cecil, Lord Burghley and Francis Walsyngham, two experienced and far-seeing statesmen, probably took the measure of such men as Hawkins and Frobisher when they came to London on such errands. It did not require much deep thinking to conclude that the Queen needed them in her service.

It is only by assuming that Burghley and Walsyngham thought and acted in some such fashion that we can explain how, two years later, we find Captain Horsey of the navy writing to Burghley from Portsmouth that he has "expedited the fitting out of a hulk for M. Frobisher." From now on Frobisher was the Queen's man, serving her with but little interruption for twenty-three years. In her employ he developed all his latent powers of leadership, both naval and military, drawing from that amazing woman an extraordinary tribute of personal esteem. For Drake and Raleigh and Leicester, Elizabeth revealed great affection and even passionate admiration. She could express a valiant faith in their high loyalty and desperate courage.

But when it was a matter of simple duty, a matter of humdrum, hammer-and-tongs naval vigilance and strategy without either spectacular privateering or actions lurid with glory, she sent for Frobisher. Frobisher, in this sense of the word, was the one of the first naval officers, just as Sir John Hawkins was the first naval constructor, who understood the vital importance of *material.* Frobisher, painfully concocting sentences to explain his views on the military situation in Europe while commanding the first Dover Patrol, was the forerunner of many an unsung but none the less valued flag officer of the royal navy. It was the most important event in Frobisher's life since he went to sea. The times were changing. The rough-and-ready piracy of the coasts was no longer for him. Elizabeth had need of him.

But first of all, and this had much to do with the Northwest Passage, she sent him to Ireland.

CHAPTER III

THE BEE IN SIR HUMPHREY'S BONNET

HEN Shan O'Neil described his father's character to Queen Elizabeth, he called him "a gentleman," and when asked to explain what he understood by that term he stated that the late Con O'Neil, Earl of Tyrone and chief of the clans, "never denied any child that was sworn to him, and he had plenty of them."

This was in 1561, ten years before Frobisher sailed over to Ireland to assist the Queen's men to pacify that extraordinary country. Here Martin met Sir Humphrey Gilbert, a kinsman of Raleigh, and gained a deeper insight into the philosophical aspect of northwest passages.

But at the time Gilbert was occupied, professionally, with the subjugation of the wild Irish tribes. Ireland was regarded by most Englishmen of that day as New England was regarded by the Colonists of the following century. It was territory to be cleared of its savage inhabitants and settled by civilized people. To argue that Ireland had a civilization when England was emerging from the Heptarchy meant as little to the Elizabethan soldiers as would an allusion to Maya and Toltec culture affect the average American Colonist's attitude toward the aborigines. England proposed to bring law and order into the Irish kingdoms, and Eng-

land failed, as she has failed ever since. The problem was beyond her powers. But Gilbert, the philosophical courtier, was then acting the part of an Irish Claverhouse, and there is no more remarkable picture in the history of discovery than that of Sir Humphrey Gilbert meditating upon the problems of geography in his tent while the peasants passed up between a double line of human heads, the heads of their own "dedde fathers, brothers, children, kinsfolk and friends, lying on the ground before their faces," to speak with the grim colonel. There is a hint, in what we know of Gilbert in Ireland, that he was, in addition to being very much a man of his time, a man of one idea. He reminds us of Conrad's Kurtz, with his hut in the African jungle ornamented with human heads, exterminating the natives and dreaming of serving humanity.

And it is of importance to note that not one of these great Englishmen who served in Ireland, neither Raleigh nor Gilbert nor Sir Henry Sidney nor Frobisher, was aware of any other method of settling the Irish question than that of terrorism. They had had a view in London of those "gallowglasses, armed with hatchets all bareheaded, their hair flowing in locks upon their shoulders, on which were yellow surplices dyed with saffron, with long sleeves, short coats and thrun jackets" and the same had "caused as much staring and gaping as if they had come from China or America." The Irish did not understand the English method of government at all. "Ulster is mine and shall be mine!" bellowed Shan O'Neil, and his conception of a strong ruler was that of a chief of his clan, first in fight and feast, first in robbery under arms and promiscuity of offspring. To suggest that if left to themselves these Irish would have revived the arts and culture of their ancestors is unreasonable. Already the stupid imposition, during Edward the Sixth's reign, of a religion and

a language of which they were ignorant, was driving the Irish into a vague alliance with the Catholic countries in Europe. More than once Spanish soldiery landed there as enemies of England. Stupidity was piled upon stupidity, and Frobisher, whose service did not last long, found himself in London in 1572 without resources and thoroughly sick of the Irish. And here we have a curious glimpse of him and the morals of a merchant adventurer of those days.

The celebrated episode of Sir John Hawkins hoaxing Philip of Spain so completely that the haughty monarch actually believed the Englishman intended to bring the English fleet into Spanish harbors, had many imitators. The gullible Don Guereau de Espes, the Spanish ambassador, who was in a perfect fever to set the Catholics of England on fire against Elizabeth, and who had his own original views as to the duties of an ambassador, leaped at the chance of securing one of the Queen's best seamen. It was easy to delude both Don Guereau and his master, because one indefatigable pirate, Thomas Stukely, had actually taken service with Spain. Stukely was cousin of Sir John, and Frobisher, hearing of the easy money to be made by offering to change sides, had let it be known to the Spanish agents that he too could be approached for a consideration.

What Frobisher's religious convictions were at this time it would be futile to enquire. We may, however, quote Froude's dry allusion to the mysterious sympathy "between Protestantism and buccaneering," which persisted until it reached its fine flower a century and a half later, in a similar partnership between Puritanism and sharp trading.

Frobisher doubtless had a few conventional religious notions, which included a tolerance for Catholics and a rooted suspicion of Papists, who were Catholics first and Englishmen second. It must be remembered that

at a later day, when one Howard was destroying the Spanish Armada, the head of the house was a pious prisoner in the Tower praying fervently for the success of the Spanish arms. A simple man like Frobisher was aware of the way the wind was blowing. His association with Gilbert had given him some new ideas concerning the expedition he had meditated to the northwest, and he probably had no scruples whatever in spoiling a Spaniard, a Papist, or an Irishman.

There lived in London at this time, in years 1571-72, the Irish Earl of Desmond. During some earlier disturbances he had been brought over to be arraigned for treason, but the insoluble nature of the Irish problem was his salvation. The English had endeavoured, in their innocence, to substitute a number of clearly defined presidencies in Ireland for the inextricably interwoven authority of the clans. It was a failure. Desmond, it was seen, would be more valuable alive in Ireland than dead in England. Yet the queen held him for the time, giving him a fair allowance for the support of himself and his wife, permitting him the run of London on parole. Unfortunately, house rent, like everything else except the queen's income, had gone up, and Desmond is known to have complained to the Earl of Leicester that he was often short of money.

Desmond's religion seems to have been easily adjusted to his circumstances, for we find him promising the Queen that if she would let him go home he would not only "restore quiet to Munster," but he would "assist in setting forward the Book of Common Prayer."

But suddenly he was in a quandary. His wife was going to have a baby. If the child were born in England, a most distasteful prospect for an Irishman, it might be held as a hostage. At all costs the earl desired to keep this domestic news quiet and get his wife permission to travel home at once. He then proposed

to break his parole and follow her. In his hurried search for assistance he either had heard of Frobisher as a likely man for the job or some one, wishing to put Frobisher in the way of making a little money, told Desmond where to find him. The earl sent his servant to sound the captain as to getting him out of England; Frobisher pretended to fall in with the idea, and after securing all the information he could, turned the matter over the to Queen's Council.

Froude seems to think this sort of thing should be called treachery, and no doubt by our pure standards of today it should be. But the sixteenth century was a century of change, not only in military and naval matters, but in ethical conceptions. What was the Spanish ambassador doing at this very moment? He was endeavouring to corrupt the Queen's servants and to foment a rising, among the more devout and less intelligent Catholics, in his master's favor. What was Sir Francis Walsyngham, a high minister of state, doing at this time? He was planting his own spies in the service of Mary Stuart so that in due course all her letters came to his hand and provided him with the evidence which culminated at Fotheringay Castle. What was Mary Stuart herself doing not five years before? She was engaged in the fine feminine occupation of assisting her lover to blow up her husband, and she was marrying the successful murderer before the dead man's body was decently reassembled and interred. There is nothing to be gained by injecting modern ethics into the discussion of a sixteenth-century corsair.

Frobisher's declaration makes clear the fact that he made no move in the matter until the Earl's servant, "Ralf Whaley, came unto me Martyn Ffurbussh, to my Lodging at Lambith above Bartilmewetide last past" very full of "a greatt secret." He was in no sense an *agent provocateur.* The earl's servant was content

with a simple promise not to reveal "the greatt secret," and from a modern viewpoint there was no need for him to let Frobisher into the secret at all before he was convinced that the captain had the will and the ability to carry out the scheme. According to Frobisher's statement to the Council, the earl was not such a fool as his servant, for he produced no money throughout the negotiations, and was indeed busy at the court soliciting a passport for his wife. It seems probable that the earl was better informed, after meeting his old friend Ormonde again, than Whaley, but that he allowed Whaley to continue his intrigue with Frobisher. There are many things in this declaration which modify Frobisher's position. It is not extravagant to suppose that Walsyngham's spies came to the captain and persuaded him to make the report. If the court had been really concerned about Desmond's escape they would hardly have permitted him the liberty of an ordinary citizen. Frobisher met him at "Sent-leger house in Southworke," and beyond being somewhat short of money the Earl was not suffering much hardship. Even this seems problematical, for he offers first a thousand pounds and then alters the reward for his escape to "five hundred pounds and his island of Valentia." It is difficult to work up a strong sympathy for this unfortunate man, who was not only a very "ill horseman" but "very sick on the Sea and not able to bide it long." To Frobisher, the tall, strong buccaneer, the earl was a miserable poor-spirited rebel, and the "treachery" with which Froude and other historians have imputed to the captain resolves, on scrutiny, into an ordinary transaction of the times. The Queen and her Council, playing a game of which Frobisher at the time knew nothing, let Gerald Fitz Gerald and his wife go home, a concession his lordship repaid (not for the first time) with a treachery of his own. Nine years later, when

the Pope (Gregory XIII) called on the Irish to rise against the excommunicated Elizabeth, Desmond welcomed an army of Spanish and Italian soldiers at Smerwicke, and war to the death against the Fitz Geralds was proclaimed. And in 1583 his lordship was caught once more, hunted into the mountains beyond Tralee, and slain as he slept. Martin, home from his voyages and passing up from Rotherhithe to his house in Cripplegate, would see the Desmond's skull on a spike on London Bridge among the fly-blown fragments of quartered Jesuits. Seeing the sights in Elizabethan days needed a strong stomach.

The Irish episode is important to us because Sir Humphrey Gilbert introduced Frobisher to the notice of Sir Henry Sidney, commanding the forces in Ireland at the time. The inevitable result of service in Ireland seems to have been a passionate desire on the part of the English to go somewhere else. Nowhere in the world was there such misery and such implacable savagery. Neither mildness nor fury achieved anything in Ireland. That these soldiers discussed the possibility of finding a fortune beyond the seas is highly probable. Gilbert was a courtier, and in the period toward which we are now advancing the court was the one sure way of financing a commercial enterprise. It is possible, of course, that these two men discussed their future plans as schemes for the glory of England, home, and beauty. It is possible. But a slight acquaintance with human nature and the sort of men who go to sea leads one to suspect that these noble sentiments had a background of trade and aggrandizement. There is no sentiment more generally misunderstood among theoretical patriots than that of the pioneer. History cannot be comprehended by pacifists.

The court was the one sure way. The Queen—"this queen" as she was soon to be called by men of affairs

abroad—was virtually a stockholder in every expedition that left England. It is an amusing paradox that while the Spanish ambassador was formally protesting against some particularly infamous piece of piracy on the high seas, and the Queen and her Council were as formally expressing regret and promising justice, they were often deep in the venture and stood to profit by the sale of the spoils. When the head of Drake was demanded, this extraordinary woman attended a dinner on board the *Golden Hind* and took a sword with her. Francis Drake was no more. Sir Francis rose in his stead.

The court was the one sure way. Frobisher, a rough merchant-adventurer, was well aware of it after his Irish service.

Sir Henry Sidney was brother-in-law to the Earl of Warwick, and to this lord Frobisher carried his scheme to find a way through to Asia and India by the north-west. He had convinced himself by long study of available charts, and particularly the Zeno chart, that the thing could be done. And apparently the Earl of Warwick thought well enough of it to bring the matter up in conversation with Burleigh, Walsyngham, the Earl of Leicester, and Sir Philip Sidney. A new road to Cathay! So it presented itself to their ardent minds. Anything about "far Cathay" seemed to inspire men to unbelievable effort and generosity. And making full allowance for the colonising ideas of Raleigh and Frobisher, it must be admitted that in the sixteenth century the minds of men had not grasped the true nature of wealth. The talk is all of gold, pearls, precious stones, and rare commodities like cochineal, spices, and indigo, silks, and ivories. Even the actual schemes of development in the Americas seem to have been in part conceived as outlets for the rapidly increasing unemployed population. There was a sound reason for this. In the tropics the shores visited by

navigators were not only hot, but fevers, agues, and mysteriously unfamiliar diseases carried men off with terrifying rapidity. In the northern regions the weather was appallingly cold and the coasts apparently inhospitable. Gold was what those men wanted—gold and precious stones. It became an obsession. They looted Spanish galleons and stood dumfounded at the wealth of the Indies, stored in those galleons' holds. That this inrushing tide of gold was depreciating the currency never entered their tough practical minds. An English farm in the year 1500 let at £4 a year. It was rated at £50 to £100 in 1576. The gold the Spaniards were pouring into Europe was lowering the purchasing power of the money and the increased cost of living was driving men out to seek yet more gold beyond the seas.

So we find that, ever at the back of the minds of queen and council, in fostering the growing spirit of adventure in England, was a hope that some new territory might be discovered to match the astonishing riches of Peru and the Spanish Main. The countries of Europe were rapidly become satrapies of Spain. She sprawled, like a gold-gorged monster, across the Continent. From the Netherlands to Sicily, from the Atlantic to the Adriatic, a generation was growing up to accept Spanish domination as one of the inexorable facts of existence. To break this spell, to fan to a flame the sullen-red resentment of northern men, was Elizabeth's eventual destiny. But the practical minds of her council, in their battle with Spain's suave and insolent emissaries, knew that gold and yet more gold must be gotten if their hopes were not to die. Treasure was the sinews of their war. And men in high places listened with frank and friendly interest when bronzed sea-captains, laying scarred and hairy thumbs on grimy

"sea cardes," explained how a new road to Asia might be found beyond the Spanish rule.

Into the tale now comes a son or a nephew of that Admiral Lock, or Lok, with whom young Martin went to sea, one Michael, who had been active since the reign of Mary in the Muscovy Company. Sir Hugh Willoughby had opened up the White Sea in 1553, and a trade in furs and tallow had followed between London and Archangel. The Muscovy Company had this business as a monopoly. They were making money, and the news that one Captain Frobisher was seeking financial assistance for a new expedition to the northward roused the company to immediate protest. It was not so long since Martin had been known on the northeast coast as a successful and experienced pirate. They were not to be blamed if they saw in this new scheme a veiled resolution on the part of Frobisher to do a little looting in a new direction. They entered a plea at headquarters that any concessions to the captain would be an infringement of their inalienable rights to trade.

Frobisher's friends, however, were powerful, and they had the private ear of the Privy Council. Into that ear echoed the word "Gold!" and at once every member was agog. The question flew about, "Where? Where?" and forming the answer to suit the obsessing hallucinations of their lives, the rumour spread that this Captain Frobisher, now home from his voyages, had information as to a new route to the treasuries of the Orient, mountains of gold, mounds of pearls and rubies, acres of diamonds! He had probably heard the tale from some dying comrade, who had divulged the secret of the route! When men have made up their minds to believe something which tickles their cupidity, nothing stands before them. The very reticence of a man like Frobisher would convince these wise Londoners and men about court that he knew something

very wonderful indeed. There is no reason to suppose that the captain was privy to the celebrated "black stone" affair, which will be discussed in a later chapter. But it was futile to discuss any aspect of discovery with his patrons save that of gold discovery. Many of them seemed to think gold was found in mines piled up in convenient bars. Rents and prices were soaring higher and higher, and for a sound reason. Europe was an armed camp. War was devouring the wealth of the world. For every peasant, husbandman, or craftsman there were two soldiers consuming without producing anything except famine, pestilence, and death. Catholic and Protestant were at one another's throats, killing, burning, and laying waste. The rosenoble and the shilling bought less and less each year. It was imperative that new stores of gold be found very soon. Here was a scheme, and a man who appeared competent to carry it out. And the Earl of Warwick and his friends were not averse to being in, as we say, on the ground floor. The Privy Council handed Frobisher a letter to the Muscovy Company suggesting that they coöperate in the expedition, either by directly supporting Master Frobisher or licensing a subsidiary corporation to make the attempt. The Privy Council, in short, gave official sanction.

So now the bee which had been buzzing in Sir Humphrey's bonnet was out and flying round the council rooms in London, making wide circles at times. Even the Queen, preoccupied with the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and what it might portend for England, heard the distant hum, and maids-of-honor whispered in the wardrobe of gold mines in northern Asia. Frobisher, waiting for a word from Warwick, would see the French ambassador, Sieur de la Mauvissière, arrive for an audience and retire with a grave face. The Queen's Majesty was invisible, suffering from the leg

ulcer which tortured her for years. The court would hum with other sounds than Sir Humphrey's bee during those momentous years. What did Martin care? He wanted money to fit out a couple of carracks to prove his dream was true, that a bold mariner could slip past that long icy coast into the turquoise seas and golden mountains of Cathay.

Michael Lock, merchant of London, director of the Muscovy Company, was leader of his committee when they met to discuss the scheme. He listened while the others expressed their sour suspicions that Martin was one of these coast freebooters out for bigger game. Martin, never a patient man or one with a beguiling tongue, not certain yet of his sailing orders but aware of the distrust with which these gentlemen regarded him, very likely told them what he thought of them when they turned the matter down. A man's reputation swells or diminishes by talk. Men who had sailed with Martin and later entered another company's ships, perhaps the Muscovy Company itself, would pass around slightly decorated stories of the kind of man he was and the character of his deeds. Michael Lock probably put a different value on such a man. The vote went against the indignant captain, but Michael kept in touch with him.

The Muscovy Company had failed not only to take a great opportunity when it offered, which was ordinary human short-sightedness, but they under-rated Frobisher's drag at court, which was bad management. The Privy Council took a more definite tone in their communications. They gave their protégé another letter in which the company was instructed either to undertake the expedition or to grant Captain Frobisher and his associates a license. The company was told, in brief, that if it would not help it must not hinder.

Michael Lock now came out on Martin's side. They

formed a company, and while Lock, a merchant of good standing, sold some shares among his associates, Martin endeavoured to interest the persons of the court. The result, however, was characteristic of the human race in general. Talk was cheap. Gossip and rumour were cheaper still. When it came to subscribing real money most of the valiant conversationalists shrivelled up and changed the subject. Would Captain Frobisher believe it, but the shilling bought less than a third of what it did before the war? And times were very uncertain. It was said the Queen was going to agree, after all, to the return of enemy property. It was said the Queen was thinking of marrying the Duke d'Alençon. It was also said there is a new plot to kill Her Majesty. The Duke of Norfolk was in the Tower.

A great deal was said, as usual, and little done. At the end of a few months of intensive stock-selling the paid-up capital of the new company was eight hundred and seventy five pounds, equal to twenty thousand pounds (a hundred thousand dollars) of our day. This, as anyone familiar with the financing of polar expeditions is aware, was not enough for immediate charges, leaving out unforeseen expenses and replacements. It appeared as though Martin, in spite of his friends at court, in spite of Michael Lock's faith in him, would never get the chance to put that faith to the test.

Mr. Lock, however, was a long-headed man. Having been in the business of merchant-adventuring, like his father before him, having a first-hand acquaintance with cosmography and navigation and able to understand William Borough's technical arguments, he decided to be the guarantor of the enterprise himself. He was not going into it for the purpose of pure science, but to increase his business as an importer. Supposing the passage to Cathay failed them, Lock knew from Cabot's reports, seventy years before, that the north-

western coasts would supply him with furs and tallow and whale oil. It cost Mr. Lock nearly eight hundred pounds more to meet the entire cost of the ships.

We are now in the autumn of 1575. Before describing the beginning of Frobisher's attempt, we may glance at the map of Europe unrolled at this time. The Queen had been on the throne seventeen years. She had survived amid a swarm of enemies by good fortune indeed, but also by virtue of an amazing knowledge of statecraft, of humanity, and of herself. She was now, after twelve years of almost incessant sickness, which included small-pox, gastro-intestinal trouble, fever, neuralgia, ulcers on her leg, and chicken-pox, enjoying comparatively good health, and the princes and kings of Europe were in consequence almost driven out of their senses by the swift changes in her policy, the deep guile of her concessions, and the nerve-racking effrontery of her sudden resentments.

Philip, a slow and bigoted man, was unable to credit the English with true virtue because he had seen their poor mean country and (to him) uncivilized way of life. He seems, from the correspondence he carried on with his ambassadors and viceroys, to have lacked the sense of a great executive. His ambassadors and viceroys, however, were pitted, to their surprise, against four of the ablest human beings then alive. They were the Queen, the Earl of Leicester, Lord Burghley, and Sir Francis Walsyngham. These four were never in agreement about anything, they were often at direct loggerheads; yet in some mysterious manner, behind the play and interplay of their quarrels, their bickerings, and their astute manipulation of European animosities, a new England was being born. Little by little it had come to this—that Philip, the most powerful monarch —on paper—of his time, was on a peace footing with a Queen who he knew was in league with her own

corsairs in looting his treasure ships. No doubt Philip himself scarcely knew how it had come about. More, he was constrained to receive an envoy from Elizabeth, Sir Henry Cobham, whom he had dismissed summarily from his court four years before. More than that, this envoy, very much *persona non grata* at Madrid, was coming to state, in plain words, the opinion of Queen Elizabeth, that the deck of an English ship was English ground. She said to Philip's ambassador, "I assure you it is a thing my father would not have borne, nor will I bear it, and unless your King takes better order with these men, I must imprison subjects of his in return." Sir Henry went to Madrid to inform the scandalised monarch that the Inquisition must let English seamen alone when they entered Spanish ports. It is difficult for us to comprehend the emotions and outlook of those stirring times. How are we to translate into modern ethics the outraged Spanish populace declining even to let a house to the heretic envoy of a heretic queen? How can we explain the pious and sluggish most Catholic Majesty keeping a staff of assassins, one of whom had recently attempted the life of Elizabeth? How can we excuse that Queen herself giving up a party of miserable half-crazy fanatics, Anabaptists, who had never done anybody any harm, to be tortured and burned, to please that same Catholic King? These practices and animosities apparently no more affected the lives and activities of Martin Frobisher and Michael Lock than would the lynchings of negroes and the battles of armed desperadoes modify the lives of men and women living a few miles away. Martin and Michael heard the tales, no doubt, as they went to and from between the City and Greenwich, but they pursued the even tenor of their way. They had now ships and the money to fit them out. They had crews assembling and money to pay the wages. They had "sea

cardes," astrolabes, and books. They had Master William Borough's rough notes which eventually formed his pamphlet *Discovers of the Variation of the Magneticall Needle*—no small help in going northwest, where the compass varies with disconcerting abruptness. And they had engaged the eminent Doctor Dee, as a sort of consultant to go through their calculations, and to give the crew instructions in navigation. They even had visits from high officials of the court, then sitting at Greenwich.

The tide was on the turn. Martin Frobisher, sometime slaver and pirate of the Narrow Seas, had his foot on the first rung of the ladder which led to admiralty and a famous name in sea-history. In early spring of 1576 he was ready to go. He was thirty-eight years old.

CHAPTER IV

THE EGGSHELLS GO TO SEA

N THIS year of grace there are several ships at sea of over fifty thousand tons, which was the total tonnage of all English ships afloat when Frobisher set out on his quest for a northerly passage to Cathay. The Queen had a few vessels approaching a thousand tons, but until Sir John Hawkins took over the dockyard maintenance they were more ornamental than useful. Ships mean docks, as Admiral Jellico remarked after the late war, and (as he drily added) docks "cost a great deal of money"; but the public is not roused to enthusiasm at the contemplation of them. In the sixteenth century, as in the twentieth, the public is reluctant to look at docks and at the price of them. The tendency, then as now, was to send men to sea in something less than comfort and safety.

The expenses of the voyage have been preserved and are appended here. There was not much reading-matter taken, and we may conclude the captain himself did not get far in the "book of cosmographie in French."

	£	s.	d.
Paid for a book of cosmographie in French	2	4	0
Paid for a great globe of metal in blank in a case	7	13	4

For an instrument of brasse named Armilla Tolomei or Hemisperum	4	6	8
For an instrument of brasse named Sphera Nautica	4	6	8
For an instrument of brasse named Compassum Meridianum	4	6	8
For an instrument of brasse named Holumetum Geometricum	4	0	0
For a ring of brasse, annulus Astronomica	1	10	0
For a little standing level of brasse		6	8
For an instrument of wood, a staffe named Balastetta		13	4
For a great carte of navigation	5	0	0
For a great mappe universal of Mercator in prente	1	6	8
For three other small mappes prented		6	8
For six cartes of navigation written in black parchment whereof 4 ruled playne and 2 rounde	2	0	0
For an English Bible greate volume	1	0	0
For a cosmographical glasse and castill Knowledge		10	0
For a New World of Andreas Thevett, Englishe and French		6	8
For a Regiment (rule) of Medena (Spanish)		3	4
For 20 Compasses divers sorts	3	3	0
For 18 hover glasses		17	0
For an Astrolabum	3	10	0

The professional and scientific needs of the expedition were well considered. We now observe a few entries of disbursements by Master Lock which indicate

that shipmasters were very much the same in the sixteenth century as in the twentieth.

	£	s.	d.
Boat Hyre [boat hire] of Mr. Furbisher following his bussynesse alle this tyme	10	10	0
To Ducke, upholstery for beddinge for Mr. Captayne Frobiser	3	16	5
For a bottel of aquavitae for Mr. M. Frobiser, paid it to his manne Borrowes [Mr. William Borough, of whom we shall hear again]		10	0
Beare [beer] and breade at launchinge of the Gabrielle and for maryners dyners [dinners]		19	0
Aquavite [brandy] 3 hogsheads paid to Anthonye Duffilde, brewer	13	18	0

The items are humanly interesting and it is a subject of legitimate conjecture whether the three hogsheads of aquavite, at £4 12s. 6d. each were of the same quality as that purchased specially for the captain for ten shillings a bottle. Probably not.

The medicine-chest carried by Frobisher should not be forgotten. The list of drugs is long and imposing, and we are justified in regretting that no record remains of their particular applications. The names sound today like an astrological incantation, and in those days of faith in sorcery they may have had a beneficial effect upon the ailing mariner:

Ambra grisi Oriental
Cibetti
Masche oriental, allo gorbi, Ligne Aloes,

Rubarbi agavise, Turpenti, Dagridii.
Cifn India. Tumerick, Calam aromatica,
Irios, Galanga, Myrrha fine, Mastictus
Argenti viti, Ladderi, Aumne Gomme,
Oppoponax, oppen, Alloes, Bellizonica,
Styrax Calmuc, Myroboralia Chebue
Bellerichi, Indiori citrini, Ledoria,
Spica Nardi, Cardamoni, Ligne Rhode,
Colucuthes, Margarite, Boli oriental
Lapis Lazuli, Cantatri Citemi,
Corralina, Coralli Rubili, Borax
Camphora, Castorium.

The two vessels which Frobisher and Lock had purchased for the great adventure were small even for those days. The *Michael* had a displacement of about twenty-five tons. The *Gabriel* was about twenty tons. They also had a "pynnasse" of seven tons. The prices show that a considerable amount of work had to be done upon these ships after purchase.

	£	s.	d.
For the hull of the new shippe Gabriel	83	0	0
For the new pynnasse of V'j ton	23	0	0
For the shippe Michael, with all takle and furnyture	120	0	0
For new takling and rigging them all	229	16	10

The personnel consisted of Captain Frobisher in command, Christopher Hall, master of the *Gabriel*, Owen Gryffyn, master of the *Michael*, and some thirty-two men and boys. What kind of men and boys they were we are able to judge only by the events of the voyage, and it is a pity we have no record of their senti-

ments. We can hardly believe that when the ships left Blackwall, where they had been taking on stores, the boys' mothers did not come down to bid them farewell and good voyage, and to make sure they had everything they needed. There was a certain amount of official importance about the departure; the expedition was under the patronage of the Privy Council; and the crew, as well as the ships, would have new rigging, There was no uniform in the modern sense—each man (and boy) was the architect of his own appearance; but the following sea-kit of a sixteenth-century quartermaster may serve as a guide in filling up the picture of Martin's ships' companies mustering on Sailing-day, the 7 of June, 1576, "in the name of God" departing for lands unknown. . . .

A sea-chest, a silver whistle, a cape of new black frysdown, a coat of black cloth with sleeves, a doublet of blue changeable camlot, a white fustian jerkin, also one of green, a white frieze coat with sleeves, two pairs of long hose, one green, the other blue, two pairs of white hose, one pair of long white breeches, two shirts of fine Holland's and five coarser ones, a black cap with a silver badge, a new black velvet nightcap, another black cap, a hand gun or pistol, a sword and buckler, a dagger with a yellow haft and iron chain, a black frieze mantle, a canvas sack with pillow and pillowcase.

Such was the gear of a petty officer of the time. The boys would have no silver whistle, of course, nor any weapons beyond a jack-knife and a poniard, but they certainly had a Prayer Book and a Testament. It was not the custom to sail on a foreign voyage without them, and to reach a heathen land without such consolation was unthinkable. There is nothing to show that the admiral took any strong interest in this part of the equipment, however. Everything we know of Frobisher leads us to figure him as a man who left theology alone

and confined himself to fearing God and keeping a keen watch on deck. And at this more serious time his whole attention was focused upon the future, when he got out beyond the Shetlands.

Down the River from Blackwall they dropped with the tide, leaving the anxious mothers of the boys, the wives of the men, and the envious watchers by the dock-side; leaving, perhaps, an observant gentleman taking notes and carrying his news to the Spanish ambassador, news of another corsair setting out. Oxenham was already afloat on the Pacific. Drake had been back and forth to the Spanish Main, and now was preparing his *Pelican* for the great voyage of his career. Down the River went Martin with his eggshell fleet, and the "pynnasse" had the bad luck to crash into a ship tacking up to London, and lost her bowsprit and foresail, carried away in the collision. So they came to Greenwich and anchored. Here the voyage began.

Here, too, we gain a glimpse of Elizabethan England. In a way this lilliputian armada was a symbol of the time. The great deeds of that famous period were not achieved in great ships. Martin, admiral of fifty tons, anchored solemnly in front of the Queen's palace where she was then holding her court, and fired a salute. We can imagine Her Majesty, interrupted in a conversation with Walsyngham, discussing, of course, the extraordinary news that the Spanish army in Flanders was not only without a general and without wages, but that the soldiers were going off in companies to loot the villages of Catholic Brabant. The ladies in waiting called Her Majesty's attention to the scene across the river—the diminutive flotilla of—what was the name? —Captain Martin Fyrbussher. Bound whither? Ah yes, for Cathay. The fleet of the Cathay Company. The court heard the popping and saw the smoke of Martin's carronade, and grouped respectfully round

the Queen at the open window. It was June and the view was pleasant Greenwich. What thought that great Queen as she looked out? One is constrained to fancy that her dominating emotion, once she had torn herself away from the business of state, the intricately woven tapestry of European politics, was a sort of profane jocularity. Cathay? Cathay in those three eggshells? God's death! This Fyrbussher person should be a proper man. Boom! boom! Hear the fleet saluting us! What was it Master Hawkins called it! "Going to hell for pleasure." There, there! God speed you, Captain Fyrbussher, though whether he ever makes London River again, who shall say? Mr. Secretary, let a messenger go on board and bid the captain take leave of us tomorrow. To Cathay in such craft! Who ever heard of such a thing?

And indeed the messenger, arriving in a rowboat, standing up in that boat, found his head and shoulders level with the deck on which the admiral was awaiting him, and probably echoed his mistress's wondering ejaculations. He found Martin big enough, however, when he scrambled up alongside of him, and the choleric blue eye of the Yorkshireman warned the lily-handed courtier to avoid any allusions to small ships. Yes, he would come, for sure. Her Majesty was very kind. And next day, making sure the anchors had good hold, and ordering all hands to stay aboard, for he intended to sail the moment he got back, Martin went to court. What the Queen thought of him she did not say to anyone who recorded it. But Elizabeth was an absolute monarch—the last England was to enjoy—and an absolute monarch depends utterly upon the ability to judge men and women in a flash. What did she think of Martin? She never quarrelled with him, nor did she ever give him that gruff affection she had for Drake and Hawkins. She never wrote him letters or kept him

hanging round her at court. But when Drake's star had set and the red-bearded little admiral was down and out,

"Slung between the round-shot in Nombre Dios Bay,"

and on the way to becoming a legend for England, Martin had been keeping the Narrow Seas and storming the batteries at Brest. Through the murk of the years we have this one thing certain, Queen Elizabeth, the last absolute monarch of England, knew a man when she saw him.

Before he left the River, Frobisher, in spite of his social and official engagements, took an observation, and found the compass variation to be eleven degrees and a half. This preoccupation with the science of his profession may seem strange to a landsman in a man whose record up to the present had been that of an active and unscrupulous adventurer. The gift of being a good navigator, however, is no respecter of persons. That it is a gift, and a science, is generally admitted. It also happens to be an art. The finest equipment known to man will never change a bad navigator into a good one. And the born navigator, on the other hand, such as Frobisher was, rises supreme above the most contemptible craft to which he may be appointed. Martin was a master mariner. He was in tune with the mysterious life of the lonely ocean, and his observation of compass variation on his early voyages is one of the notable achievements of his career.

Bad weather in the North Sea, an untried crew not yet trained to work together, and Martin put into Harwich. Once in, he had difficulty in getting out again. The storm abated a little, but Frobisher could not wait for fine weather. He knew that if he were to make the Northwest Passage at all he must be off the coasts in June when the sun was farthest north. He tried three

THE BOROUGH MAP AND SEA CARD OF FROBISHER'S FIRST VOYAGE TO THE NORTH WEST

times and was fain to give it up. His ships were too small.

The wind did not shift until June 18th, when they slipped out, *Gabriel, Michael,* and the "pynnasse." Setting a northerly course, they arrived off the Shetland Islands on the 26th, after a series of gales. The Gabriel leaked and the crew were short of fresh water already. They put in at St. Fronion's Sound. On sailing thence Captain Christopher Hall, master of the *Gabriel* reports with considerable satisfaction that they made a league and a half an hour—about four knots. For these bluff-breasted little ships it was unusual.

But on June 30th the fair wind from the south had become a gale and everything had to come off the ship. They drove under bare poles for nine days along the coast of Greenland. And before the storm blew itself out the unfortunate "pynnasse," which had left Deptford on a Friday and had had a collision in the River, disappeared in the murk to leeward and was lost with her ship's company of four.

Frobisher himself was in need of repairs. His mainmast was sprung, his topmast blown overboard with what Master George Best calls "extreme foul weather." He was busy making observations again, however, and we find three on the map close together in about latitude 62°N. The vast amount of ice, along the coast of what he calls "Friesland" but which was really Greenland, was appalling to men in the eggshells. Captain Hall, writing his log up in later years, says he "saw the coast rising like pinnacles of steeples" in the glow of the afternoon sun.

Frobisher sailed due westward. He knew that there was land ahead if he could only keep on. But now another disaster occurred. The *Michael,* twenty tons, Owen Gryffyn commanding, had disappeared. The admiral naturally believed her foundered. She was

not. It was Owen Gryffyn that was found to be defective. The gale had been too much for him. Those tremendous seas, like horrifying coast standing up in the ruddy glow of sunset like "pinnacles of steeples," the loss of the "pynnasse," the steady drain on his fortitude, had broken him down. Owen Gryffyn, in short, had shown the white feather. He had deserted his commander at the very moment when the iron-hearted man needed support. Now was the testing time. They were out "beyond all outer charting," and Owen Gryffyn turned tail and sailed safely home. One writer, himself a Welshman, has bitterly assailed Gryffyn and says he "exhibited the national characteristics of zeal without perseverance." Nothing could be more unjust. Frobisher himself was only three generations removed from being a Welshman. Dereliction of duty is the monopoly of no race. Owen was one of Captain Frobisher's bad bargains, and the finest commanders have had the same misfortune with regard to their lieutenants. Owen Gryffyn sailed home, told a cock-and-bull yarn of how he thought Frobisher in the *Gabriel* had foundered, and was, very properly, not believed. His duty in any case had been to carry on himself. Frobisher turned up, a month after Gryffyn, and that officer fades out from the pages of history. He was not the stuff of which the Elizabethan shipmasters were made.

Frobisher, after searching for the *Michael,* went on. He was east of Cape Farewell, or, as he called it, Cape Terra Firma, the southwestern extremity of Greenland. He had taken an observation in 65° N. and 40° W., and according to the "sea carde" the compass variation was increasing, which would add to his perplexities. He had ample opportunity to emulate friend Gryffyn, who, says the good George Best, "mistrusted the matter, and conveyed himself privily away from" Frobisher, and

went home. Frobisher was more fortunate in his own sailing-master. They were in a sad state and needed overhauling. They were reduced to one half-dismasted ship with eighteen officers, men, and boys. What the boys thought of the expedition we do not discover. But Frobisher's "great spirit and bold courage" and the personality of a born leader seem to have permeated the tiny handful of valiants. The captain, in council with his officers, stated that he would "make a sacrifice of his life unto God" before he gave up his search for an English passage to Cathay. No mutiny is reported, and it perplexes a modern seafaring man to picture the forlorn misery of that ship's company tossing on the enormous icy billows of the polar sea. They must have been everlastingly drenched with spray, and green seas tumbled aboard. Many a pot of hot food went into the scuppers as the *Gabriel,* twenty tons, bore up into the sixty-third degree of north latitude, and on July 28th, a foggy morning with heavy seas running, and much ice, they raised the coast, a mountainous desolate shore above the bergs.

Later the captain discovered this land to be an island, and it corresponds to what is now known on the maps as Resolution Island, off Baffin Land. Frobisher called it Queens Foreland and so he marked it, or William Borough did so for him, on his sheepskin sea carde.

Christopher Hall, the master of the *Gabriel,* now proved himself to be the man for his job. He was one of those dependable resourceful subordinates who can carry out orders before they are given, and who are as vital to an expedition of this nature as the leader himself. Hall, regretting the "pynnasse," of course, was out in the boat trying to discover a passage among the bergs. These enormous masses of ice, among which the *Gabriel* herself was no more than an eggshell to be cracked in an instant, were coming down on the very

course Frobisher wished to sail—E.N.E. The sun was now hot and the bergs, running streams on the southern flanks, were dangerous to the intrepid pilot in his tiny boat. More than once he was in imminent peril as he searched for an anchorage inshore where the weary *Gabriel* could refit. A vast mountain of ice suddenly turned turtle and all but carried him under. These men were unconsciously experiencing in sober fact the mythical adventures of Ulysses among the clashing rocks of Sicily. "The marvellous work of God's great mercy" befriended these pious explorers, and Master Hall pushed on until he reached an island. It was named after him. We see it on George Best's naïve chart, "Hawles Yland" on the north shore of "Frobisher Streights." High honour for Hall, and high good humour for the Admiral. Frobisher believed he had found it at last. The current was bringing the ice swiftly down the strait. He was not unduly simple to believe this argued a clear passage between America and Asia. He lay to outside, watching the ice with some misgiving, waiting for Hall and his companions to return from the land he could see on the weather bow.

Hall, who had got ashore on his island, could see the *Gabriel* from the high hill he climbed. He also saw fog coming down over the sea, and the terror of blindness in an uncharted channel, with tides, currents, and moving bergs, was too much for him. He ordered his men to pick up souvenirs of the place and start back at once. Anything would do, Frobisher had told him, "living or dead, stock or stone, in token of Christian possession, which thereby he took in behalf of the Queen's most excellent Majesty. . . . Some of his company brought flowers, some green grass, and one brought a piece of black stone, much like to sea-coal in colour, which by the weight seemed to be some kind

of metal or mineral. This was a thing of no account in the judgment of the captain at first sight, and yet for novelty it was kept, in respect of the place from whence it came."

Cautious as he was by temperament, Frobisher found himself sailing up a broad channel heading east nor' east, and was unable to doubt any longer. The last week in July he sailed for sixty leagues. He named the strait after himself "like as Magellanus at the south-west end of the world, having discovered the passage to the South Sea."

At last Martin himself went ashore. He took his one boat with eight men and his faithful Hall. Wonders now crowded upon them. They found signs of a fire on the ground and Frobisher also "saw mighty deer, that seemed to be man-kind, which ran at him; and hardly he escaped with his life in a narrow way, where he was fain to use defence and policy to save his life." This passage in Best's brief but excellent report is regarded generally as obscure. It is possible, however, that the "mighty deer" were moose and their apparent humanness no more than a vivid impression of the observer. Perhaps it was a doe charging to defend her young. Perhaps the sudden vindictive savagery of the attack seemed a human trait to the men from a war-torn Europe. Whatever it was, they forgot the excitement of seeing animals behave like men in the new wonder of men who at first appeared to be animals. Ashore on the top of a hill Frobisher "perceived a number of small things fleeting in the sea afar off, which he supposed to be porpoises, or seals or some strange fish; but coming nearer he discovered them to be men in small boats made of leather." Eskimos in kayaks, no doubt, and the astonishing craftsmanship in the design and manufacture of these boats is sufficient to justify Frobisher's supposition. His habitual caution was

lulled also. The bellicose and swift-moving natives in their skin canoes, watertight and laced closely about the men's waists so that they became a species of monster, half man and half boat, were almost cutting the captain off from his own boat. "He bent himself to his halberd, and narrowly escaped the danger, and saved his boat."

Frobisher was here in a cleft stick. He had to go out prospecting; he wished to get in touch with the natives and he had only one boat. It was in the highest degree necessary to preserve that boat. He had now a full opportunity to regret the loss of his "pynnasse" and the supposed loss of the *Michael*. When he returned to London and heard Owen Gryffyn's tale and perhaps put a few questions to him—"Where is your sea carde, Master Gryffyn?" "Show me your log, Master Gryffyn,"—he certainly would recall his desperate situation with only one boat; and Master Gryffyn, full of ready excuses and sullen evasions, would get a steely gleam from those choleric blue eyes.

For, after all his caution and foresight, Frobisher lost his boat and five of his men. The story is entirely characteristic of the seaman in all ages. The captain, by the exercise of immense tact and diplomacy, had established some sort of intercourse with the natives. He had entered their houses and seen how they lived. "Very strange and beastly" is his summing up of their domestic habits. They had been aboard the ship and had displayed their physical strength. They had scandalised the crew by eating their meat raw. And Frobisher had by signs induced one of them to pilot him up the strait to the open water of which it was believed to be the entrance. The native, by signs, agreed and said it would take two days. Probably the signs were incorrectly interpreted. Probably also the native, like many savages, was entirely untrustworthy. Frobisher

had his doubts. He had had experience with African savages and he saw that these people were a merciless and treacherous crowd. He allowed no one ashore without hostages being held. The crew, after the fashion of crews the world over, were entirely preoccupied with exchanging useless trinkets, buttons, buckles, old knives, nails, bolts, and so on, for sealskins, which fetched prodigious prices in London among the fashionables. Frobisher was not the commander to deprive his men of this privilege after their terrible experiences at sea. He had probably done the same as a sailor in Guinea himself. But he would not let them go ashore and trade. He had his doubts; he did not trust the natives any further than he could see and reach them.

When his pilot was ready to go ashore, to get his kayak and scull up the strait ahead of the ship, five men were in charge of the boat to take him. The captain, looking down at his acquisition, who already had a bell, a knife, and some cloth to clinch the bargain, was wondering whether the man knew the channel, or was only lying. He then noted with disapproval that five English sailors had a stock of their belongings with them, extra clothing, knives, shoes, pannikins, for trading. The captain ordered them to land the native on a rock he pointed out, and to return at once. No trading on the beach, which was full of men. Remember the boat.

The five men in the boat were probably unconscious, as they pulled for the rock, of what they were about to do. Only for a minute would they touch the beach, get a few skins, and hurry back. The grinning native with his bell and knife and roll of drugget was tumbled out upon his rock, whence he leaped ashore, and in a flash the boat rounded the point towards the beach.

The captain, watching this performance, had a heart full of care. Soon he saw the boat again, standing off,

with but two men at the oars, who kept their eyes on the beach. Frobisher and his officers gave a great shout. The boat was to come back at once. This was too much for the oarsmen. They rowed in to the beach, once again vanishing from view. And that was the last any of their shipmates ever saw of them. Five of his most active and enterprising men and his only boat were lost to the captain, and further advance up the supposed passage to Cathay was out of the question. They now numbered only thirteen souls, several of them sick and unable to work.

Snow fell all night, twelve inches of it, and snow is even worse than fog to the mariner. He can neither see nor hear through it. Martin Frobisher was about this time "more ready to die than to live." He wasted two days sounding a trumpet and firing off his small cannon to let the five miserable fools know he was standing by. But they were no longer there. Even the sealskin tents of the natives had vanished overnight. Frobisher was about to up anchor and seek another village to seize several hostages for his lost men, when fourteen canoes came round the point heading for the ship. Flushed with success in capturing the boat, they were bent on securing the whole ship's company.

The *Gabriel* was a ship of twenty tons. Her bulwarks amidships were so low that an active man could spring from a rowboat on to her deck. With less than a dozen available men and boys Frobisher dared not let this swarm of cunning and treacherous savages approach within reach of her gunwales. He trained his falconet on the advancing canoes, one of which held a score of men, and the attackers stood off a little. The captain, knowing savages well, changed his course. He put away his cannon, directed all hands to make gestures of friendship, and brought up some more bells. There was nothing on earth, probably, of less use to a

Labrador native than a bell, but there was nothing for which he could conceive a more fatal infatuation. Bells were wrecking the whole social system of those parts. The natives who had secured bells were going up in the world, while those who had no bells were talking of revolution and setting up a new government which would give every man his bell. Probably the spirit animating the war canoes was to capture the *Gabriel* and secure a whole supply of bells at one swoop.

Suddenly they perceived the strange chief on the ship making friendly signs. Such folly seemed incredible. They sent a man in a kayak to reconnoitre. The siren sound of a bell lured him forward. He gazed longingly at the strange and lovely thing, within which dwelt a melodious spirit, but could not be persuaded within reach of the captain's great arms. Martin, a student, in his way, of practical psychology, tossed the thing towards the native and the anguished savage saw it sink. He came nearer and nearer, watching with fascinated gaze as the captain slowly tolled another larger and more magnificent bell. There is a point beyond which human nature breaks down, and this point the cunning, greedy creature, sitting in his skin boat, had reached. He stretched out his hand for that wondrous bell. He would be chief of his tribe if he owned that bell. And just as he was about to clutch it the captain dropped the bell and with one mighty lunge and heave had the poor victim of covetousness, boat and all, in the air and then safely on deck. "Plucked him with main force, into his bark out of the sea," says Best, who goes on, "whereupon, when he found himself in captivity, for very choler and disdain he bit his tongue in twain within his mouth; notwithstanding, he died not thereof but lived until he came in England, and then he died of cold which he had taken at sea."

The result of this "pretty policy," as George calls it,

was that the captain had a hostage with whom he could bargain. But the rest of the natives made off and nothing more could be done to help the five men who had disobeyed orders and had fallen into the trap which their commander had specifically pointed out to them. And so, having this "strange infidel" in captivity, "whose like was never seen, read nor heard of before, and whose language was neither known nor understood of any," Captain Frobisher, with his steadfast lieutenant, Christopher Hall, and his twelve men and boys, turned the *Gabriel* homeward on August 26th. As night fell they passed out between the headlands of Frobisher's Straits.

It has been said that the captain was a man of great physical strength, so that he was known on occasion to throw a man bodily into the sea. On the homeward voyage he performed the opposite feat once again. During a storm, one of the men was washed overboard and would have been lost, but, the ship rolling over toward him, the captain reached out his mighty arms and dragged the poor soul back into the waist.

Such episodes are the gauges of the achievements of these great days. Small ships and great souls. Miserable equipment and marvellous spiritual resources. Twenty tons burthen and new worlds ahead. And six weeks later the eggshell *Gabriel* dropped her anchor in London River once more, coming up on the tide, and showing, one may be sure, all the bunting she had left, and, let us hope, firing her falconet to let the world know a captain courageous had returned from "perilous seas and faery lands forlorn."

CHAPTER V

THE BLACK STONE

HE following two voyages of Martin Frobisher were the result of a remarkable combination of circumstances. The public had gaped at the *Gabriel* and discussed the "strange infidel" who not only spoke no known language, but had bitten his own tongue in twain in his mouth. Michael Lock had discussed the cosmographic results of the voyage with the captain, and William Borough had completed, in the form we now see it, his sea carde of the voyage. The native, succumbing probably to unsuitable food and the English climate so often fatal to foreigners, had died, and public interest in the *Gabriel's* exploits was diminishing in the face of the news from the Continent, where the Spanish soldiers, after sacking Maestricht, had destroyed Antwerp, one of the finest cities in the world, burning the Bourse, the warehouses, and the residential quarters, and killing eight thousand of the inhabitants.

And then, with suddenness of fire in stubble, there ran through the city the rumour that the *Gabriel's* men had brought home some gold ore.

One thing amid all the contradictory statements and crazy old-wives' tales seems certain and sure. Martin himself had nothing whatever to do with the tale in the first place. He seemed as astonished as any man when the piece of black stone, like sea coal, but heavy

as metal, was declared to contain gold. He was well equipped to profit by such good fortune, and profit he did when the time came to make another attempt upon the passage to "Kataya," or Cathay. But at the time he rather resented the story. Only when an assayer was found to declare that gold actually was present in his black stone did Martin see the subject in its true light. Mankind is not only willing to be fooled; it is determined to be fooled. Read the tale of the gold-finers and Martin Frobisher's lumps of iron pyrites.

We may set aside George Best's biblical anecdote of a gentlewoman, wife of one of the adventurers, accidentally putting a piece of the magical stuff in the fire and thence quenching it in vinegar, where it "glistered with a bright marquesite of gold." Such tales cluster thick about all celebrated "historical mysteries," being actual examples of the mythopaeic faculty of mankind. Michael Lock, who had a great deal of money tied up in this venture of Frobisher in the northwest, has a more likely story.

Martin, on sailing, had promised his chief partner that he would bring him, as a souvenir of the new lands he proposed to discover, the first thing picked up on going ashore. When the *Gabriel* arrived, Lock, as became a shipowner, went on board, and when a preliminary report of the voyage had been made, asked what present the captain had brought him from foreign parts. Frobisher, he states, produced this piece of black mineral. And Lock, with his mind on gold, turned this promising-looking ore over to the assay-master of the Tower, who eventually reported what was in fact the truth—that it was pyrites, or marcasite, and contained no gold in assayable quantities.

Lock, who had put up much real gold to send the expedition out, was reluctant to admit the assay-master's infallibility. The assay-master, who naturally knew his

business as a servant of the Queen, suggested that if the merchant doubted him, it would be better to consult the professional assayers of the City. There was a Master Wheeler, an entirely trustworthy person—why not try him? Lock did so and Master Wheeler, testing a sample in his retorts, reported that the stuff was iron pyrites. Lock was incredulous, and Master Wheeler, who had no interest in the matter beyond his own professional integrity, recommended a brother metallurgist, one George Needham, who could be relied on to give an unprejudiced opinion. George Needham, oblivious of his client's anxiety, said it was iron pyrites, or marcasite. Gold value practically *nil*.

What was to be done? Lock had got it firmly in his head that God had guided Martin to a gold mine. All Christmastide that year of 1576 he turned the black stone over and meditated. The inevitable happened. He became more and more convinced that he had riches in his grasp. Only he and Frobisher knew where this mine lay. Early in January Giovanni Baptista Agnello, an assayer practicing in London, comes into the story. Lock had heard of him, and there can be little doubt that by this time Agnello had heard of Lock and his obsession. The assaying profession is a small one, and being human out of office hours, assayers indulge in amusing stories about their customers. Agnello was an Italian in a day when Italians were very clever, very advanced, and occasionally very unscrupulous. Agnello may also have been very honest as well, but he is under suspicion. He said Lock's sample contained a little gold. He produced what he had got out of it, a little "powder of gold."

Lock, who was, with all his credulity, no fool, now became the cautious merchant. How did Agnello happen to find gold when all these eminent metallurgists found nothing? Agnello, showing after each experi-

ment a small speck of gold, replied in melodious Italian, "*Ah, signore, bisogna sapere adulare la natura.*" Nature sometimes needs a little coaxing. They told this tale to the Queen, who usually was able to scent gold at a great distance, and she knew enough of Italian and of human nature to enjoy the joke. Both in the City and the court the news was being passed from lip to lip, losing nothing on the way, and when Sir Philip Sidney heard it he wrote it to a brother officer on active service in Flanders, and a wonderful tale it had become—Frobisher, finding a new way to the East, had discovered by accident vast gold deposits. The assayers had pronounced the stuff brought home "the purest gold." And another gentleman, writing at the time, gave it as his opinion that Frobisher had discovered the very mines whence Solomon derived the gold for the Temple.

The value of these reports lies in the glimpse they afford us of the public state of mind. Nature might indeed demand a little coaxing? Human nature needed none at all. Gold had become the great obsession. Frobisher, standing still at the centre of this sudden whirl of interest, had it borne in upon him at length that from Queen to cabin-boy the main reason for his voyages was neither the charting of the Polar Seas, the passage to Cathay, nor the development of nautical science; but quite simply the bringing in of cargoes of metallic gold. Gold that glittered, that crushed the men who had to carry it, and sank through the bottom of the ship. There was no substitute. Gold was what they were going out for. Gold they were determined to get before the Spaniards could reach it. Gold beyond the dreams of avarice. It was a sudden revelation of the substructure of the Elizabethan era.

It was natural for Frobisher to seek Lock, who had made this highly satisfactory discovery. Lock pro-

duced the gold Agnello had coaxed out of the black stone. Frobisher was embarrassed by the importunity of investors. Gold or iron, the black stone had wrought a magical change of opinion. Now everybody wished to be in on the ground floor of this new Eldorado. Gradually, during the spring of 1577, Frobisher arrived at a final opinion. The gold, if it was gold, was good fortune. He himself had made no claims at all for the stuff. But if money was to be had for the asking to return for more of it, Frobisher was not such a fool as to refuse the lucky turn of fortune.

Lock thought so, too. He was far from idle. On the 17th of March of that year, 1577, the Cathay Company was formed, on the model of the Levant and Muscovy companies, to trade in the Northwest. Special concessions were bestowed upon the infant enterprise. They were to pay only half customs dues for twenty years. Privateers poaching on their territory were to suffer confiscation of ships and cargo. Lock as the promoter was appointed governor. Martin, naturally enough, was appointed High Admiral of Cathay and the routes leading thereto. Each of them was to receive one per cent of the profits, Martin having a salary as well. New shareholders were charged a levy on admission of thirty pounds each to liquidate the eight hundred pounds deficit on the first voyage. This brilliant notion, of making new shares pay interest on old investments, was probably Lock's, and reveals an astute financial intelligence.

The venture was now proceeding under the happiest auspices. The Queen, fresh from her latest broil with the pious Philip, and highly pleased that her agents were borrowing money in Antwerp at five per cent while the Spanish could not get it at any price, was gracious enough to subscribe a thousand pounds and approve the loan of "a tall ship." It was not long before four thou-

sand four hundred pounds, equal to a hundred thousand pounds of present coinage, was subscribed, and preparations were under way for the expedition. Martin had another reason for haste. Those five silly sailormen who had been captured had wives and families or parents and sweethearts. We are not straining probabilities when we imagine the good captain having a number of distressing visits from these people. If the men had been washed overboard, then God's will be done. But surely Captain Frobisher could go back and seek for those poor fellows. Captain Frobisher did. He spared no pains to find them. It is a remarkable trait in his character, in a day when human life was astonishingly cheap, a day when men and women, young maidens and old dames, boys and grandfathers, were burned, racked, and mutilated in most dreadful fashion, that Martin sought far and wide for his foolish shipmates.

The expedition now assuming an official character, standing orders were received from the Queen. For some reason Her Majesty limited the company carried in the three vessels to one hundred and twenty. Included were some criminals, who were to be landed in Greenland with food and stores; presumably an early experiment in deportation. Precise instructions were issued as to the movements of the ships on the new coasts and all other considerations were to give way to the search for gold. Seven months' stores were carried. If no more ore was to be found, the Queen's ship was to be sent home at once and Frobisher could proceed east, west, north, or south, to America or Cathay, exactly as he pleased. Elizabeth's interest in the venture, should there be no gold, was purely theoretical and confined to pious wishes. The *Aid* was a tall ship, and tall ships cost money. She was not to be jeopardized

looking for a new passage among the icebergs. Send her home.

He was to proceed, if conditions were favourable, due westward until he was certain that he had entered "The South Sea." He was then to return in haste to accompany the *Aid* with her assumed cargo of gold. He was to maintain strict discipline and Godliness of demeanour among his men and indulge in no reckless adventuring. He was to bring back a few natives as curiosities and hostages and do all he could to discover his lost men. And of course the Queen was desirous that, so far as was possible, the position of the gold-mines was to be kept as secret as possible.

The new expedition, consisting of the *Aid,* two hundred tons, the *Gabriel,* and the *Michael,* with a couple of "pynnasses," which were carried on deck this time, set sail from the Blackwall Dock on Whit-Sunday, the 26th of May, and anchored at Gravesend. The muster was as follows:

Aid—Christopher Hall commanding, with Admiral Frobisher, Lieutenant George Best, and one hundred crew, including miners and assayers.

Gabriel—Captain Fenton commanding, with Master William Smyth and eighteen men.

Michael—commanded by Captain Gilbert Yorke, a kinsman of Frobisher, and James Beare as master. Sixteen of crew.

The Vicar of Gravesend came down and the admiral assembled all his men on board the *Aid,* where they received the Holy Communion and were exhorted to comport themselves "as good Christians toward God and resolute men for all fortunes." And so they stood out into the North Sea and reached Harwich, where they took in stores.

A curious tale is told of the Queen at this juncture. She was staying at the Earl of Warwick's house in Essex and conversation would naturally include the Frobisher voyage. Warwick had been the original sponsor for the captain. The Queen was now interested. She was probably in a mood unfavourable to those about her. She was one of the greatest women who ever lived, but there is no doubt that her greatness of soul, her meanness of mind, and her weakness of body made her difficult to live with. Her leg ulcer, which appears to have been a misfortune inherited from her father's incontinence, was not yet closing, and to add to her torment she was now suffering agonies from toothache. Strype says she experienced "excessive anguish," that she got "no sleep for divers nights, and endured very great torment night and day." Yet her Council, who were also enduring excessive anguish because of her incalculable and infinite changes of policy, were informed that Martin had more men in his ships than she had permitted and a letter was to be sent post haste to Harwich to order the supernumeraries ashore. Which was done; and who can blame the captain if, among those to be left, he included the six criminals destined to die amid the dreadful loneliness and misery of Greenland? Before he left he did, according to Best, who was on board, ride into Essex from Harwich and, "kissing Her Highness's hands, with gracious countenance and comfortable word, departed toward his charge."

Perhaps the toothache was better.

CHAPTER VI

META INCOGNITA

IN THIS second voyage to the northwest a new Frobisher begins to emerge from the pages of the old chronicles. He is no longer the truculent mercenary rover, the master mariner living under suspicion of piracy. He is "admirall" and "generall" of the expedition under royal patronage. The strain of leadership into the Ultima Thule brings out a deeper note in his character. And he is fortunate at this time in having with him a man who was not only a captain courageous, a resourceful leader, and a shrewd observer, but the owner of a remarkable prose style. George Best, who has already been quoted in his report of the first voyage, communicated to him orally by the admiral, will be drawn upon again for the voyages in which he sailed. The strength and beauty of Best's concise and complete account is comprehended when one remembers that he was observing and writing just ten years after Archbishop Parker had written Lord Burghley that "after much toil" the English Bible had been completed. Best was a man who quite easily could have been in later life in the pit of the Globe. Shakespeare was twelve years old, a Warwickshire country boy, when Frobisher and Best were facing the freezing gales and "fleeting islands" of ice in the Northern Sea. And it is not difficult to detect, under the sailorlike directness

of Best's narrative, a feeling that he was telling of heroic days for us who were to come after.

Once clear of Harwich and the everlasting nagging of the Council, with a full company and stout ships under them, they raised the Orkneys in a week, and anchored to fill the water-casks. Gentlemen adventurers from the *Aid* went ashore "to give the natives a treat," as sailors say, and were astonished to find the islanders had run off to hide. The lieutenant in charge went forward alone and discovered that he and his friends were supposed to be pirates. This account, of course, came to Martin's ears on board and no doubt he listened to it in an enigmatic silence. Best was evidently feeling his way toward the modern Scotch story, for he says that the natives were miserably poor in goods and craved old wearing apparel, shoes, and so forth "before money, for their vituals, yet are they not ignorant of the value of our coin."

A pleasant and perhaps satirical commentary upon this nature-note is Best's further remark, "And here our gold-finers found a mine of silver."

What Frobisher thought of his gold-finers and their silver mine is best revealed by the fact that he weighed anchor next morning, and sailing out of St. Magnus Sound, set his course for his newly discovered straits. On this voyage, to confound the spies who were probably on board and to render the log useless to strange navigators on his return, Frobisher set down his distances, and sometimes his "height," as he called his latitude, in cipher. It shows the vagueness of Elizabethan charts when we find that even the distance from Blackwall to Kirkwall was kept a secret by Best.

And then, says he, they "had a merry wind" and kept west-northwest for two days, when it ceased to be merry and became contrary, so that they tacked and "lay in traverse on the seas, making good, as near as we could,

our course to the westward." And so they crossed the bows of a fleet of English fishing-boats, homeward bound from Iceland with their catch. Weather permitting, they put letters on board for home and friends so dear, and sailed on into the Northern Sea. For twenty-six days they sailed without sight of land, so that their speed was moderate—about three and a half knots. "At length God favoured us with more prosperous winds, and after we had sailed four days with good wind in the poop, the 4 of July the *Michael,* being foremost ahead, shot off a piece of ordnance and struck all her sails, supposing that they descried land which, by reason of the thick mists they could not make perfect."

Better sure than sorry. What the *Michael* saw was ice, interminable fields of ice. That night when the weather cleared, land was descried plainly, and they knew it to be Frisland. Frobisher, to have the report of some one who knew the road and the nature of the landfall, sent Christopher Hall on board the *Michael.* An observation was taken, the "height" was found to be sixty degrees and a half, and Best observes quietly that his admiral was "the first who ever passed beyond fifty-eight degrees to the northwards."

Frisland, or Greenland as we call it now, was a singularly unpromising coast. The shore was practically inaccessible, the visible high land consisted of grim snow-covered ranges, and the fogs came down with terrifying suddenness whenever the Admiral wanted to seek a landing. Frobisher had the natural horror of a shipmaster of losing sight of his ship. He gave it up, and set forward for Meta Incognita.

It is a stormy sea which lies on the sixtieth latitude between Greenland and Labrador, and the *Michael,* twenty-five tons, had her rudder broken and her topmasts carried away. Somehow they managed to heave to under bare poles and ride out the gale, or "flaw of

wind," as George calls it. Happily indeed they found themselves in sight of the other ships again when the weather cleared. This was on the 17th of July, "having the evening before seen divers islands of floating ice which gave an argument that we were not far from land. Our General, in the morning, from the main top, the weather being reasonably clear, descried land, but to be better assured, he sent the two barks two contrary courses, whereby they might descry either the South or North Foreland, the *Aid* lying off and on at sea, with a small sail, by an island of ice, which was the mark for us to meet together again." And about noon, he adds, they "made the North Foreland perfect." No time was lost in getting down to business, which was to dig gold. "Our General" the next day went ashore with his "gold-finers" and showed them where the famous black stone had been picked up. But not a piece more could they find. They moved over to other islands, and here, luckily for Frobisher's peace of mind, great store of the ore was located. It was late at night, the northern twilight enabled them to find their way back, and the ships welcomed him with a "volley of shot," though whether this joyful gesture was to celebrate the captain's return, the discovery of the ore, or merely the excellent eggs, fowl, and a young seal which came with him, we are left to conjecture.

Besides the ore, Frobisher had observed signs of native habitation. To guard himself from the risks of the first encounters, he set off next day "with his best company of gentlemen and soldiers, to the number of forty persons," to explore. They landed on Hall's Island, discovering more mines of "ore," and walked up into the interior, ascending a high hill to select some suitable harbour for the ships. Here Frobisher took possession of the country in the Queen's name. The men "made a column or cross of stones heaped up of a

good height together in good sort, and solemnly sounded a trumpet and said certain prayers kneeling about the ensign, and honoured the place by the name of Mount Warwick in remembrance of the Right Honourable the Lord Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick, whose noble and good countenance in this, as in all other good actions, gave great encouragement and good furtherance."

It was on their return from this pious pilgrimage that Frobisher and Hall underestimated the skill and shrewdness of the Eskimos, who hailed them across the fields of snow on the flanks of Mount Warwick and appeared glad to see them. So far as we may judge, Frobisher immediately set about obtaining hostages in order to treat for the safety of the five lost men. Having put his company on board the boats, Frobisher and Hall went back to trade with two of the natives who had followed them in hopes of getting one of those wondrous bells. Various articles changed hands—buttons, buckles, and so forth—and one of the natives in an excess of merchandizing zeal cut off the tail of his sealskin coat to give to the commander. Frobisher gave a signal, and he and Hall suddenly laid hold of the pair. The idea was to rush them, carry them to the boat, and push off.

But the scheme failed. The sloping ground, slippery ice, and the lack of hold the Englishmen had on the greasy furs of the Eskimos, caused the former to fumble. The natives sprang away in a flash, and running to a rock where they had laid down their bows and arrows, began a furious onslaught which ended in the unarmed Frobisher, with an arrow in his buttock, racing Hall to the beach and calling to the boats for help.

The excitement among the men, who had heard of the adventures but had not been with the captain on his earlier voyage, was immense. Here were savages.

Not very big, it is true, but indubitable savage infidels. A shot from a caliver sent the natives off, for they had used all their arrows. "Our men," says George, "speedily following them. But a servant of my Lord of Warwick, called Nicholas Conyer, a good footman [runner] and unencumbered with any furniture [armour], having only a dagger at his back, overtook one of them; and being a Cornishman and a good wrastler, shewed his companion such a Cornish trick that he made his sides ache against the ground for a month after."

And so he was taken alive, but the other escaped. The gallant explorers, however, had a bad time. They ran into a storm and were compelled to sleep on "hard cliffs of snow and ice, wet, cold and comfortless," not knowing whether they would ever get back to the ships.

The ships had their troubles, too. The *Aid* caught fire from the cook's chimney tumbling down and would have been destroyed had not a boy espied it and given the alarm. It is a pity the boy's name was not set down, for it required "great labour and God's help to extinguish it."

And in truth the whole expedition was in a perilous state. The bergs were coming down out of Frobisher's Passage in a steady procession, huge and menacing. Says Best: "We having mountains of ice on every side, we went roomer for one and luffed for another; some scraped us and some happily escaped us; that the least of one thousand were as dangerous to strike as any rock, and able to have split asunder the strongest ship in the world."

He goes on to explain their manœuvring in this danger. "So much was the wind and so little was our sea-room, that being able to bear only our forecourse we cast so oft about, that we made fourteen boards [tacks] in eight glasses running." That is to say they tacked

fourteen times in four hours. "But God was our best steersman," he observes, piously, mentioning also Charles Jackman and Andrew Dyer as expert mariners. What really saved them was the long Arctic day and the "clear nights, which are without darkness." And on the 20th of July the storm ceased; the captain saw his ships and came joyfully on board. "Whereupon altogether upon our knees," the captive infidel no doubt an interested spectator, "we gave God humble and hearty thanks for that it had pleased Him from so speedy a peril to send us such speedy deliverance."

The next day, resuming the search for gold, they crossed over to the southward shore of the strait under the Queen's Foreland, discovering a bay where the ships could ride and also cliffs and sands all glittering with golden sparkles, which on trial turned out to be no gold at all. "No better than black-lead," mourns George, and adds, sagely, "verified the proverb *All is not gold that glistereth.*"

The activities of the expedition now resolve themselves into two divisions. There were evidently among the gentlemen on board some who desired to explore in a scientific sense, and who were behind Frobisher in his great desire to penetrate into the unknown to the westward. On the other hand, there were the Admiral's commission and standing orders to load the ships with all possible "ore." Against his will the Admiral vetoed the exploring party, and brought all ships over to a newly discovered harbour well up the strait called Countess of Warwick's Sound, about thirty leagues from the Queen's Foreland. There, the gold-finers having obligingly reported a "good store of ore which in the washing held gold to our thinking plainly to be seen, everybody, from Frobisher to the boy who discovered the fire on the *Aid,* set to work digging the ore. Long drifts into the hillside were discovered in 1862, where

they had dug out the mineral which eventually was locked up, with quadruple locks, in the Tower and in Bristol Castle.

Storms, ice, fog, and currents had done their worst, and still the tiny barks *Michael* and *Gabriel* rocked buoyantly at anchor alongside of their tall consort the *Aid*. We may wonder how such craft could have stood the buffeting; but perhaps, save for the ice, it was no worse than our Narrow Seas could show. Sure it is that Martin Frobisher was the Elizabethan seaman above all others for the treacherous squalls and currents of northern waters. He understood them, and it almost seems as though he were more at home therein than ashore or making long voyages southward before the steady driving trade winds. We may say his voyages to the northwest were futile, that he discovered neither gold nor the famous Passage. Yet those of us who understand the meaning of the words *personnel* and *command* know that he was training a company of men and officers who were like the yeast which ultimately leavened the whole lump. Eleven years later came the great test, the long-anticipated day, and while stout old Hawkins saw to it that every ship from his yards had gear and rigging that would stand up, Frobisher brought to the fleet men who had endured the most frightful hardships, who had practiced their seamanship among the fleering, toppling icebergs of the north, and who had no fear at all of the Don and his huge galleons rolling up from the Bay.

This, indeed, is the essential feature of these voyages. The search for ore, the fantastic exploits of the gold-finers and assayers, the comic-opera note in locking up in Bristol Castle a heap of useless stones, the angry recriminations upon Frobisher by the others when their dreams of wealth faded, all these are but light comedy relief. Great events were in the womb of time. Under

the small squabbles of men coveting gold was forming a new England and a new and unforeseen power in Catholic Europe, built on a maritime supremacy which the disdainful Dons imagined to be theirs and their heirs' forever. The sick man who refused to stay behind in Harwich, who died during a storm off Greenland and who was buried in the icy deep, was a symbol of the new spirit of Elizabethan England. We have heard of it before in the earlier years of history—that tough character and truculent curiosity; but only at this time does it seem to take on the guise of nationality. It was, in truth, Spain who created England, and it was England who was eventually to smash Spain. For Spain it was either world-power or downfall. She had grown soft with the gold rotting the fibers of her national character, and when the great day came the seamen in the English ships had had their training among the rocks and currents of the Narrow Seas, or fighting the fogs of the North Atlantic.

There is a letter, as already remarked, which in its biblical strength of phrase and purity of English is worth preserving here. It comprises in a few words the character of the Elizabethan seaman, being entirely void of conscious art, the hasty work of a man to whom writing was ever a difficulty, and of whom much has been written concerning the severity of his discipline and the animosity it engendered. Frobisher, gotten at length into some sort of intelligible touch with the debased savages of the country, and hearing vaguely that three of the five men are yet alive, hastily writes a note. Across the centuries it rings like a friendly shout.

> In the name of God in whom we all believe, who, I trust, hath preserved your bodyes and souls among these infidels, I commend me unto you. I will be glad to seeke by all meanes you can devise

for your deliverance, eyther with force, or with any commodities within my shippes, which I will not spare for your sakes, or anything else I can do for you. I have aboord of theyrs a man, a woman and a childe, which I am contented to deliver for you, but the man I carried away from hence last yeare is dead in England. Moreover you may declare unto them, that if they deliver you not, I wyll not leave a manne alive in their country. And thus unto God whom I trust you do serve in haste I leave, and to him we will dayly pray for you. This Tuesdaye morning the Seaventh of August, Anno 1577.

Yours to the uttermost of my power,

MARTIN FROBISHER.

I have sent you by these bearers, penne, incke and paper, to write backe unto me agayne, if personally you can not come to certifye me of youre estate.

This was all that could be done. They had now captured a woman and child, as well as the man so deftly thrown by the Cornish "wrastler," and Best gives a remarkable account of the meeting of the two adult savages, the Englishmen looking on with interest:

Having now got a woman captive for the comfort of our man, we brought them together, and every man with silence desired to behold the manner of their meeting and entertainment, the which was more worth the beholding than can be now expressed by writing. At their first encountering they beheld each the other very wisely for a good space, without speech or word uttered, with great change of colour and countenance, as though it

seemed the grief and disdain of their captivity had taken away the use of their tongues, and utterance. The woman at the first very suddenly, as though she disdained or regarded not the man, turned away and began to sing, as though she minded another manner; but being again brought together, the man broke up the silence first, and with stern and staid countenance began to tell a long solemn tale to the woman. Whereunto she gave good hearing, and interrupted him nothing till he had finished; and afterwards, being grown into more familiar acquaintance by speech, they were turned together, so that I think the one would hardly have lived without the comfort of the other. . . .

While the seamen with the General, as Frobisher is called in the old chronicles, were having exciting brushes with the savages, and George Best was erecting a fort, defended on the landward side by Best's Bulwark, the miners and their gentlemen friends were enduring the hardest kind of toil. In the space of twenty days they dug and loaded almost two hundred tons of ore. Some of them, unused to lifting, had incurred ruptures, others had injured their legs with the heavy boulders, and all were ready to drop with fatigue. Their haste was needed. Every night the air grew colder, and each morning the ships had to be broken free of the ice. Winter was coming. August 24th they set sail for home, and, holding a southerly course at first, encountered a bitter wind and in the morning snow lay six inches deep on the hatches. They were clear of the ice, but bad weather was ahead. The *Michael* disappeared and was found afterward to have headed for the Orkneys, the master knowing the northern route better, and she anchored at last in Yarmouth.

The *Aid* and the *Gabriel* apparently ran out of one

gale into another. The *Gabriel* had her master and boatswain washed overboard and the former was lost. The *Aid,* being a taller ship, was carried ahead, and even when the gale blew itself out and "it pleased God in his goodness to send us a calm, we perceived the rudder of our ship torn in twain and almost ready to fall away." So overboard half a dozen couple of the best men had to go, with planks and nails and lashings of rope "to strengthen and end the matter." They came up out of that cold, cold sea more dead than alive. It pleased God, says George, to give them a calm day to do it.

Another interesting note of our lieutenant is that in northern waters they had to take their observations by the sun "because the long day taketh away the light not only of the polar, but of all other fixed stars. And here the north star is so much elevated above the horizon that with the staff it is hardly to be well observed and the degrees in the astrolabe are too small to observe minutes. Therefore we always used the staff and the sun as fittest instruments for this use."

Sunday, the 15th of September, twenty-one days out from Queen's Foreland, they sounded with the lead and "had ground at sixty-one fathom, white small sandy ground and reckoned us on the back of Scilly," and set their course, so George puts it, "east and by north, and by north, east-north-east, and north-east among."

Later, he reports many soundings and "so shallow we could not tell where we were." They then found on the lead "branded sand with small worms and cockle-shells," whereby they figured themselves not far from Land's End. But they were shot between Scilly and the mainland and could not get back into the Sleeve, as George calls the Channel (Manche), so they went on up along St. George's Channel. "The weather being very foul at sea, we coveted some harborough because

our steerage was broken and so came to anchor in Padstow Road, in Cornwall." But the weather there was none so good, so to avoid being driven ashore they plied along the Bristol Channel to Lundy, and were driven from that perilous region without good holding-ground for an anchor, and put to sea again, finally arrived at Milford Haven, on the northern side, in Wales, and getting at last their "long desired safety."

So much for the *Aid,* two hundred tons. The *Gabriel,* far behind, without a master, was in danger of running ashore for lack of navigation, when by great luck she fell in with a Bristol ship, who piloted her home. And there the *Aid* found her, when by an order in council she herself came round up-Channel and the ore, with much reverence, was "committed to keeping in the castle there."

Master Frobisher's second voyage was over.

CHAPTER VII

ASSAYERS AND SOOTHSAYERS

IT WOULD be good to know why a man like George Best, a trusty lieutenant of the captain, delegated to important and arduous duties, able to express in few words a wealth of meaning, suddenly unburdens himself of a lengthy, evasive, and ambiguous sentence concerning the nature of the ore. "The commissioners," he says, "after sufficient trial and proof made of the ore, and having understood by sundry reasons and substantial grounds, the possibility and likelihood of the passage, advertised her Highness that the cause was of importance and the voyage greatly worthy to be advanced again." What is all this? Best was writing after it was all over, and he must have known that the ore had turned out to be worthless. The answer may be, that Best was very much the captain's man; he was an officer and not concerned with the stuff save as cargo; and moreover he could not bring himself to believe that so many experts could be entirely wrong. Sailors don't care.

Consider, furthermore, the third voyage. With a couple of hundred tons of the ore locked up, under quadruple locks, in two of the strongest castles in England, Lock, the cunning speculator whose fanatical faith in the ore had overborne the professional opinion of the best assayers of London, was unable to find money to pay the crew's wages (£700), to pay the soldiers car-

ried, or to pay the gentlemen adventurers their share of subsistence money. The assayers were as belligerent as ever in denying any gold in the stuff brought home. Jonas Shutz, a German expert, had been leader of Frobisher's "gold-finers" on the second voyage. He and our old friend Giovanni Baptiste Agnello, who had got him the position, set up furnaces and reported a yield of forty pounds sterling to the ton, which would mean eight thousand pounds of gold brought home, a return of fifty per cent on their capital. Shutz claimed, however, that he needed much larger furnaces in order to extract the gold left in his slag. Now this was fair enough, were it true. But the reputable goldsmiths of London, who were supplied with samples, denied that there was any gold in the ore at all. There was doubtless a trace of gold, and of silver, too, just as copper ore often yields silver in small quantities. But to the goldsmiths this was not gold ore, nor did it contain authentic gold in the sense understood by the trembling Michael Lock and the exasperated Frobisher.

Beyond all this, again, another foreigner, one Doctor Burchard, had been retained by Secretary Francis Walsyngham to give an opinion. The established goldsmiths had backed their report upon "gage of their life and goods"—a fairly dependable guaranty in those days of wholesale confiscation of life and goods. Doctor Burchard, bedeviling Frobisher with his letters, offered to bet "land, goods and life" on there being much gold in the ore.

The fact was, these men were mountebanks, and Frobisher, Lock and company were ignoramuses who knew not the difference between a professional man who knows what he is talking about and the smooth-tongued promoter. Walsyngham may have had ulterior motives in employing Burchard. No one ever knew just what that wily and tireless politician and diplomatist

was doing. But it is a fact that he never would have been tricked by a spy who did not know his business, any more than Frobisher could have been lied to by a sham navigator. When it came to metallurgy they all evidently regarded it as one of the black arts and were afraid to oppose professional rumble-humble with common sense.

The age was an age of faith and its spurious by-products, superstitions and fantastic credulities. We read of the King of Navarre, playing dice with the Duke of Guise, suddenly beholding "great round drops of blood on the board between them," and fleeing to his chamber in a sweat of terror. The minds of men were saturated with thoughts of blood and gold. The strong food and drink of the times engendered strange dreams. Men started up from foul mattresses aflame with visions of golden cities, or cities of blood, cities with walls of jasper and gates of pearl. Prisoners in damp dungeons, who looked for their one ray of sunlight each day through the rugged barred slots, saw the Holy Virgin herself standing before them in pitying pose. Nothing was incredible to these groping, lusty, believing, ignorant people. It was easy for the astute humbugs who practiced as independent metallurgists to delude even Walsyngham. What Walsyngham knew about diplomacy would fill volumes. What he knew about chemistry could have been written on an English rose-noble.

There is something tragic in the spectacle of a man like Frobisher rushing to and fro between London and the court at Windsor, where the tale ran about among the ladies in waiting, as they gazed at the huge narwhale's horn the Captain had presented to the Queen, that two hundred tons of pure gold had arrived. The sea-unicorn must be a terrible great beast to have such a vast horn in his forehead! Two hundred tons of gold! In Bristol Castle it is, under four great locks.

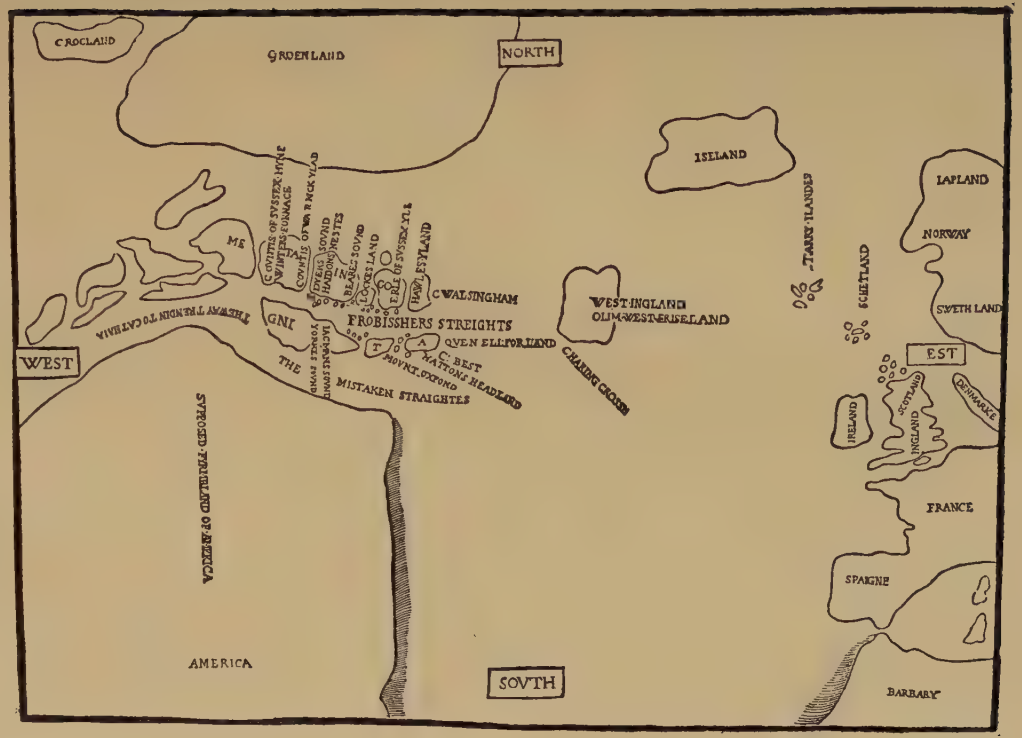
And they say the gentlemen have brought home many fine sealskin furs. Gold and furs! Wherever he went Frobisher, with his dream of sailing up his strait between America and Asia into the South Sea, was deafened with talk of gold. He must have cursed the day Michael Lock ever conceived the crazy notion that a piece of black stone contained precious metal. It is extraordinary that nowhere in England was there a piece of genuine gold ore so that men might compare and understand the difference. And yet, in such case it is nowise sure that men would have understood. The age of experimental philosophy was near, but not yet over the horizon. We have but to read George Best's naïve conclusions concerning the Gulf Stream to see that an argument was still sound so long as it sounded well. Whether things actually were so, as proved by going to sea, was of secondary importance.

Going to sea, to prove, to accomplish, was Frobisher's passion, and yet he had to spend his days pestered by the court, who wanted gold; by Lock, who wanted explanations; by fraudulent foreigners, who wanted expensive furnaces and fat retaining fees; and by investors, who wanted to know whether they ought to hold their shares or sell. As if he cared what they did so long as he might sail again to seek his Passage. Time was passing. News of these voyages was getting about in Antwerp, Genoa, and Venice. Some other navigator would be feeling his way northwest soon.

The winter passed, as before, in ceaseless conferences, quarrels, and investigations, each party charging crookedness and incompetence. But whether the ore was worth bringing home or not, the importance of establishing some kind of permanent claim to Meta Incognita was being discussed among the "gentlemen." The principle that America everywhere contained mines of gold and silver was accepted; and indeed the principle has

been confirmed to an astonishing degree. And it was therefore highly desirable that the Queen's Majesty should authorize a colony to be established on Frobisher Straits, in either America or Asia, to the end that future navigators and adventurers should discover there the English dominion. By what magic the results of the gold-finers were transmuted into success we can hardly discern at this distance. The court was none the less optimistic. If a small expedition brought back practically no gold, a large fleet of vessels would bring back an immense fortune of gold. A colony of men could be left in Meta Incognita all winter to tunnel into the frozen bowels of the earth to tap the true mines of which hitherto they had been only scratching the outcrop. The Cathay Company proceeded to do what many another bankrupt concern has done since. It made calls for more capital on the shareholders. Somewhat more remarkable, it secured the money. It also discovered that many people with surplus cash, who had not invested previously, were eager to subscribe. They were permitted to subscribe. There was no semi-official patronage this time. Voyage Three was to be under the direct supervision of the Crown.

Almost without being aware of it, we are now witnessing the inception of the first authentic scheme of colonial expansion in the history of North America. It is fair to describe Frobisher's third voyage in these terms. Observe the make-up of the company. Captain Fenton, late of the *Gabriel,* who was evidently a soldier, was appointed lieutenant-general and governor of the proposed colony. A hundred colonists were accepted—thirty Cornish miners, thirty soldiers, and forty seamen to man the *Gabriel, Michael* and *Judith,* which it was intended to leave behind. Fifteen sail of ships, including two from the Queen, were to compose the armada, and the *Aid's* consort, the *Thomas Allen,* was four hun-



Best's Map Showing Frobisher's Discoveries in Detail But Not to Scale

dred tons. Twelve of them were to return at the end of the summer laden with ore. The other three were destined to face the polar winter.

So we have them there, in Harwich Harbor, all assembled and ready, on May 27th, 1578. Best is full of glee. One detects a note of light-heartedness under his smooth-flowing scriptural style, and we see in his list of ships and captains, modestly inserted halfway down, the name of Captain Best, in the *Anne Frances*. We are free to suppose him patronizing the new men who had never been north of fifty-five in their lives. Hall, who had been in the game from the beginning, a tower of strength to the admiral, was chief pilot of the fleet. In his disposition of the personnel we gain a glimpse of the naval officer Frobisher ultimately became. We see the executive, the disciplinarian, evolving from the buccaneer and intrepid leader. Drake was out on his "famous voyage" at this time and was making his dispositions with regard to one Master Thomas Doughty's incitement to mutiny on the high seas on board Her Majesty's ship *Golden Hind*. In that somber episode off Port St. Julian, and in the following "Articles and Orders to be observed for the Fleet," we discover the beginnings of the excellent strong structure of naval discipline which has been brought to its present perfection by generations of officers nurtured in that tradition.

> Articles and Orders to be observed for the Fleet. Set down by Captain FROBISHER, General, and delivered in writing to every Captain, as well for keeping company, as for the course, the 31, of May.
>
> 1. Imprimis, to banish swearing, dice and card-playing, and filthy communication, and to serve God twice a day, with the ordinary service usual in

Churches of England, and to clear the glass according to the old order of England.[1]

2. The Admiral shall carry the light, and after his light be once put out no man to go ahead of him, but every man to fit his sails to follow as near as they may without endangering one another.

3. That no man shall by day or by night depart further from the Admiral than the distance of one English mile, and as near as they may without danger one of another.

4. If it chance to grow thick, and the wind contrary, either by day or by night, that the Admiral be forced to cast about, before her casting about she shall give warning by shooting off a piece; and to her shall answer the Vice-Admiral and the Rear-Admiral, each of them with a piece, if it be by night or in a fog; and that the Vice-Admiral shall answer first and the Rear-Admiral last.

5. That no man in the fleet, descrying any sail or sails, give upon any occasion any chase before he have spoken with the Admiral.

6. That every evening all the fleet come up and speak with the Admiral, at seven of the clock, or between that and eight; and if the weather will not serve them all to speak with the Admiral, then some shall come to the Vice-Admiral, and receive the order of their course of Master *Hall,* Chief Pilot of the Fleet, as he shall direct them.

7. If to any man in the fleet there happen any mischance, they shall presently shoot off two pieces by day, and if it be by night, two pieces, and shew two lights.

8. If any man in the fleet come up in the night, and hail his fellow, knowing him not, he shall give

[1] A short prayer, with a psalm, was used every four hours, at the changing of the watch, as the glass was "clearing" (running-out).

him this watchword, BEFORE THE WORLD WAS GOD. The other shall answer him, if he be one of our fleet, AFTER GOD CAME CHRIST HIS SON. So that if any be found amongst us, not of our own company, he that first descrieth any such sailor's sails, shall give warning to the Admiral by himself or any other that he can speak to, that sails better than he, being nearest unto him.

9. That every ship in the fleet in the time of fogs, which continually happen with little winds, and most part calms, shall keep a reasonable noise with trumpet, drum, or otherwise, to keep themselves clear of one another.

10. If it fall out so thick or misty that we lay it to hull, the Admiral shall give warning with a piece, and putting out three lights one over another, to the end that every man may take in his sails; and at his setting of sails again do the like, if it be not clear.

11. If any man discover land by night, that he give the like warning that he doth for mischances, two lights and two pieces; if it be by day, one piece, and put out his flag, and strike all his sails he hath aboard.

12. If any ship shall happen to lose company by force of weather, then any such ship or ships shall get her into the latitude of [cipher], and so keep that latitude until they get to *Frisland*. And after they be past the west parts of *Frisland*, they shall get them into the latitude of [cipher], and [cipher], and not to the northward of [cipher]; and being once entered within the Straits, all such ships shall every watch shoot off a good piece, and look out well for smoke and fire, which those that get in first shall make every night, until all the fleet be come together.

13. That upon the sight of an ensign in the mast of the Admiral (a piece being shot off) the whole fleet shall repair to the Admiral, to understand such conference as the General is to have with them.

14. If we chance to meet with any enemies, that four ships shall attend upon the Admiral; namely, the *Francis of Foy,* the *Moon,* the bark *Dennis,* and the *Gabriel;* and four upon my Lieutenant-General in the *Judith;* namely, the *Hopewell,* the *Armenal,* the *Bear,* and the *Solomon;* and the other four upon the Vice-Admiral, the *Anne Francis,* the *Thomas of Ipswich,* the *Emanuel,*[1] and the *Michael.*

15. If there happen any disordered person in the fleet, that he be taken and kept in safe custody until he may conveniently be brought aboard the Admiral, and there to receive such punishment as his or their offences shall deserve.

By me, MARTIN FROBISHER.

"Our General," says George, "well understood the office of a soldier and an Englishman, and knew well what the necessity of the sea meaneth." And he tells how the fleet, passing Cape Clear, overhauled a small bark full of dead and wounded men, sailors of Bristol, whom the French sea-rovers had left to perish after rifling the cargo. They were relieved "with surgery and salves to heal their hurts, and with meat and drink to comfort their pining hearts." Much heartened by this good deed, the fleet stood away round the west coast of Ireland, "having a large wind," adds George, and immediately reports "a great current from out of the southwest, which carried us, by our reckoning, one point to the north eastwards of our said course; which

[1] Subsequently called the *Buss of Bridgwater.*

current seemed to us to continue itself towards Norway and other the north-east parts of the world."

This was the Gulf Stream, no less, which the fleet encountered, and it is a pity they had no means with them of taking the temperature of the water day by day. Best suggests that it was the same current which the Portuguese found at the Cape of Good Hope, where it flowed westward to Straits of Magellan, passing up the coast of America and round the Gulf of Mexico and so eastward again to Ireland and Norway. In this he was correct, but his logic is curious at this distance of time. He seems to think that, because this current turns northward at Magellan, "finding no passage there for the narrowness of the straits" and eventually turns eastward again, the later deflection was also due to a narrow strait to the north of America. It had become an obsession with these navigators, that America tapered to the northward and that, could they but win clear of the ice, they would sail through, as Magellan had sailed, into the great "South Sea." It seemed to them a sort of empirical law of nature that there should be a way round. The Portuguese had found it below the Cape of Storms, and even beyond the White Sea it was believed that in summertime men could sail round the top of Europe to the dominions of Prester John. Below India and Asia the seas ran clear. How then can we fail to make it this time, with fifteen sail and the orders of the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty?

The Queen had given the Admiral what Best calls "a fair chain of gold." This was not merely for what he had done, but for what she expected him to do. It was a token, a guaranty, a symbol of royal approbation, and it doubtless evoked in Martin's soul something of the empire-builder's passion. We may deplore this passion, having benefited by it ourselves; but it is no longer possible to imagine what other spirit could have

inspired the kind of men necessary for the austere business of discovery. It is a rough and splendid altruism, after all, and Frobisher, we find, on reaching Frisland once more, and calling it West England, went ashore and "took possession thereof to the use of our Sovereign Lady, the Queen's Majesty." So came good Queen Bess to be the owner and ruler of Greenland, a region of which she had but scanty information, but which must have appeared to her a true Hesperides where were neither Hapsburgs nor Bourbons nor Guises to torment her with their conspiracies against the peace and prosperity of her realm.

It was the first time Frobisher, in all of his voyages, had found an available landing-place on the Greenland coast. He and his gentlemen went ashore, having anchored in a most "goodly harborough for the ships." They found the natives, in dress and habits, very like those of Labrador, and discovering in the tents pieces of boards and nails, besides "little boats of the country" in the harbour, were convinced that they had communication with some civilized regions. But it is more probable that the Eskimos had done a little salvaging of the wreckage which the currents and tides had washed up on their coast.

Looking at the map which George Best afterward drew to illustrate Frobisher's voyages, we behold, not the state of cosmographic science of that day, not even the image of the earth's surface in the mind of Frobisher himself, but the naïve conception of an earnest, efficient, devout lieutenant. We see here that, having heard of Greenland or Engroeneland from poring over the Zeno chart and unable to identify his own Frisland with that far northern country, he sets down West England or West Frisland as an island squarely in mid-Atlantic between England and Frobisher's Straits, which separate "Groeneland" from "the supposed Firm-

Best's Map of the World Showing the N. W. Passage

land of America." North of his West England is the trapezoid-shaped island of Iceland, and it is a curious commentary upon the sixteenth century that Best should be so vague in his notions of distances and areas when fishermen were trading regularly between England and Iceland. It will be remembered that during the second voyage Frobisher fell in with some of them and sent letters home by them.

Best's map of the world, done in 1578, is even more arbitrary. It recalls the maps issued by railway companies, on which their own route is shown in a thick straight line while the others are scarcely put in at all. Best has resigned himself, after experience, to believing that Frobisher's Strait is longer than that of Magellan. In fact he makes it several thousand miles from Queen's Foreland to the fabled Cathaia. And this is just what the British expedition of 1850 finally discovered to be the case. H.M.S. *Investigator* passed into Bering Straits, was abandoned off Baring Land and the crew finally came out into Davis Strait five years later. It raises the question, supposing Best believed in his own map, what advantage so long and arduous a sea route possessed over the warm southern route. We are not justified in thinking Best made his map without consultation with Frobisher, and perhaps the Admiral, no draftsman himself, and harassed by innumerable thoughts and theories which his observations evoked, was willing that Best should be optimistic. What was clear to Master Best was not so clear to his commander. We can but wonder whether Frobisher thought of the northwest again in his later years of public service, when he had the ear and confidence of the Queen and her court, when Gilbert was dead and Hawkins and Drake out of the way. It is not unreasonable to suppose that his views changed. He would have talked with Drake and heard of the attempt to sail northward

out of the South Sea and how Drake had to give it up and go westward to the Moluccas. And Frobisher would conclude that his passage was there, but that the ice would always be too much for them. For himself, he had by that time found his great work in life, a work which was to come very much to the fore two centuries later, when Bonaparte straddled Europe, and again a century and a quarter after Bonaparte, when the Hohenzollerns held Antwerp and Zeebrugge and Ostend—the work of holding the Narrow Seas so that no enemy could land and no English ship could fear to sail.

It is obvious that Best was confused between what he saw himself and the islands and continents marked on the Zeno chart of the North Atlantic. Charts of that day all show this mysterious Frisland below an even more mysterious Greenland. Mollineaux's Terrestial Globe of 1592 shows Frisland and Iseland as large islands to the eastward of Greenland. It also shows the island Frobisher's ship *Busse of Bridgewater* discovered on the way home from this third voyage. Men see what they are looking for. The vast masses of floating ice put many an island on a navigator's chart; the magnifying influence of fog made vague headlands seem prodigious to the early mariner in his eggshell caravel.

The harbour in Greenland, or "Frisland," where they anchored was a good one. Hall, chief pilot of the fleet, describes it as one "where may ride a hundred sail at twelve or twenty fathom and streamy ground." This probably means they could ride with their anchors streamed out, which would imply safety from fouling each other. But a good harbour in a barren and desolate coast, with thick fogs in summer and thick ice in winter, was a dubious acquisition. Frobisher abandoned it at once and sailed westward for eight days of fog, ice, and one gale after another. But even in those

waters the weather moderates for a few days and the fleet sailed on amid schools of whales, the ship *Salamander* riding over one and, so George asserts, killing it. Onward they streamed, fifteen of sail, and on July 1st, three weeks after leaving Plymouth, the *Thomas Allen,* Captain Yorke, sighted Lock's Land and Queen's Foreland.

Now begins a period in this voyage which gives us some gauge by which we can measure the sort of men Frobisher and his captains were. Hall, going ahead, reported the Straits full of ice. The fleet sailed in. And it is difficult to decide which did more credit to their country—the cool courage of the commanders or the amazing strength of the ships.

The great masses of ice were on the move. They were setting outward and the southeasterly wind was holding them up. The tides and currents added to the confusion. A ship, sailing in between the bergs, would find her way suddenly closed. The ship following her would be as suddenly nipped and all hands had to fend off. The *Dennis,* Captain Kendal, one hundred tons, was not quick enough. "She received such a blow with a rock of ice that she sank down in sight of the whole fleet," says Best, and Thomas Ellis tells in Hakluyt that the sight of this "collision" so abashed the whole fleet that we thought verily "we should have tasted of the same sauce." The *Dennis* shot off a great piece of ordnance, according to the standing orders, and by good luck all the crew were saved. But one section of a house, which was to be erected for the colonists, was in her hold and so was lost.

And then, as though these hazards were not sufficient for our captains, the wind from the southeast rose to gale force, driving the vessels, in spite of themselves, crashing among the bergs which were grinding and toppling on each other. The roar of the wind behind them

mingled with the crashes ahead, and, to their stupefaction, that same wind was packing the ice behind so that their way out to open sea was blocked. "Sundry men with sundry devices sought to save themselves," says Best, and he remarks that this storm was "outrageous," which we are willing to believe. Best becomes eloquent here, and surely he has a heroic theme. He tells how some won to open water and took in their sails; how others used a piece of ice to fend off the bergs; how yet others again were encompassed about so straitly they needs must put out balks of timber, ropes, bedding, and so forth overside to act as fenders against the ice. He goes on:

> But as in greatest distress men of best valour are best to be discerned, so it is greatly worthy commendation and noting with what invincible mind every captain encouraged his company, and with what incredible labour the painful mariners and poor miners, unacquainted with such extremities, to the everlasting renown of our nation, did overcome the brunt of these so great and extreme dangers. For some, even without board upon the ice, and some within board upon the sides of their ships, having poles, pikes, pieces of timber, and oars in their hands, stood almost day and night without any rest, bearing off the force, and breaking the sway of the ice with such incredible pain and peril, that it was wonderful to behold; which otherwise no doubt had stricken quite through and through the sides of their ships, notwithstanding our former provision; for planks of timber of more than three inches thick, and other things of greater force and bigness, by the surging of the sea and billow, with the ice were shivered and cut in sunder, at the sides of our ships, so that it will seem

more than credible to be reported of. And yet (that which is more) it is faithfully and plainly to be proved, and that by many substantial witnesses, that our ships, even those of greatest burdens, with the meeting of contrary waves of the sea, were heaved up between islands of ice, a foot well-near out of the sea, above their watermark, having their knees and timbers within board both bowed and broken therewith.

And amidst these extremes, whilst some laboured for defence of the ships, and sought to save their bodies, other some, of more milder spirit, sought to save the soul by devout prayer and meditation to the Almighty; thinking indeed by no other means possible than by a divine miracle to have their deliverance. So that there was none that were either idle, or not well occupied; and he that held himself in best security had, God knoweth, but only bare hope remaining for his best safety. Thus all the gallant fleet and miserable men, without hope of ever getting forth again, distressed with these extremities, remained here all the whole night and part of the next day, excepting four ships, that is, the *Anne Francis,* the *Moon,* the *Francis of Foy,* and the *Gabriel;* which being somewhat a-seaboard of the fleet, and being fast ships by a wind, having a more scope of clear, tried it out, all the time of the storm, under sail, being hardly able to bear a-coast each [other].

And albeit, by reason of the fleeting ice, which were dispersed here almost the whole sea over, they were brought many times to the extremest point of peril, mountains of ice ten thousand times scaping them scarce one inch, which to have stricken had been their present destruction, considering the swift course and way of the ships, and the unwieldi-

ness of them to stay and turn as a man would wish; yet them esteemed it their better safety, with such peril, to seek sea-room, than, without hope of ever getting liberty, to lie striving against the stream, and beating amongst the icy mountains; whose hugeness and monstrous greatness was such that no man could credit but such as, to their pains, saw and felt it. And these four ships by the next day at noon got out to sea, and were first clear of the ice. Who now enjoying their own liberty, began anew to sorrow and fear for their fellows' safeties; and, devoutly kneeling about their mainmast, they gave unto God humble thanks, not only for themselves, but besought Him likewise highly for their friends' deliverance. And even now whilst amidst these extremities this gallant fleet and valiant men were altogether over-laboured and forwatched with the long and fearful continuance of the foresaid dangers, it pleased God with His eyes of mercy to look down from heaven to send them help in good time, giving them the next day a more favourable wind at the west-north-west, which did not only disperse and drive forth the ice before them, but also gave them liberty of more scope and sea-room; and they were by night of the same day following perceived of the other four ships, where, to their greatest comfort, they enjoyed again the fellowship one of another. Some in mending the sides of their ships, some in setting up their top-masts, and mending their sails and tacklings; again, some complaining of their false stem borne away, some in stopping their leaks, some in recounting their dangers past, spent no small time and labour. So that I dare well avouch there were never men more dangerously distressed, nor more mercifully by God's providence delivered. And hereof both

> the torn ships, and the forwearied bodies of the men arrived, do bear most evident mark and witness. And now the whole fleet plied off to seaward, resolving there to abide until the sun might consume, or the force of wind disperse, these ice from the place of their passage. And being a good berth off the shore, they took in their sails and lay adrift.

It is a great temptation here to let Captain Best have the deck because of the excellence of his description, the authority with which he speaks, and the ability with which he touches our emotions. They were, he says, "as men nothing yet dismayed," and they set forward up the strait until some of them claimed the land "rose up in form like the Northerland of the Straits." Others, "not the worst mariners," either, did not think so. But fog enveloped the coast for so long it was not easy to decide. It began to snow also, and that "yearly altereth the shape of the land and taketh away oftentimes the mariner's marks." The fog hung over the land for twenty days.

And the disagreement among these captains was natural, for as a matter of fact Frobisher and his fleet, by currents and winds, were not looking at the northern shore of Frobisher's Strait at all, but at the southern flank of Queen's Foreland. All unknown to them and to the Admiral himself, he was sailing up what we now know as Hudson's Strait. The tide was so strong they were swept westward in spite of themselves. Best says the roar of it could be heard afar off "like the waterfall of London Bridge."

Frobisher sent his pinnace to each ship to get the captain's opinions. James Beare, captain of the *Anne Francis,* had been there the year before and made sea cardes of the place, and was heard with special atten-

tion. But Hall, the chief pilot, came out flat-footed with the opinion that he had never seen this coast before, that it was not in Frobisher's Strait. "And yet," says Best, wistfully, "the lands do lie and trend so like that the best mariners therein may be deceived." By which we may conclude that he was not then of Hall's opinion and had to adopt it later.

Conferences were out of the question. Fog came down and they lost sight of each other. Hall was with Captain Yorke in the *Thomas Allen* and they turned back to open sea, in general obedience to standing orders. Frobisher, profoundly concerned over this new waterway, with some ten or a dozen of the ships, pursued his source up "the said doubtful and supposed straits, having always a fair continent on their starboard side, and a continuance still of an open sea before them."

Best is not clear as to the state of the Admiral's mind over this mistaken strait; probably because he did not know it. Frobisher may, as Best says, have dissembled his discovery that this was not the strait he had sailed up before. He would naturally want to see where this new and much more promising channel led. We may even conclude that, had he not been shackled by the Queen's orders to go back and dig for gold, he would have sailed on into what is now known as Hudson Bay and perhaps have established his colony in that territory. He admitted to some of his company later that had he been alone and free of the responsibility of so large a fleet "he would and could have gone through to the South Sea . . . to find the rich country of Cataya."

Strong indeed would their convictions have been to override the evidence of their senses as they sailed westward into this wide waterway. Some of the fleet, setting away southerly, sighted a fair continent on their

LOK'S MAP OF THE WESTERN WORLD, DEDICATED TO SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

port side also. Some swore the tides had nine hours' flood to the westward and only three hours' ebb, proving that the channel led to an open sea. As it does, but not to the Great South Sea of their imagining. They saw the flotsam of the *Dennis* floating past them, carried by what Best called "the indraft." Some claimed that Frobisher's Strait was an arm of this passage of water, and their arguments were regarded with respect by the Admiral. Coming down again, he himself perceived a great sound going through into his own straits, and sent the indestructible little *Gabriel* through to make sure. The *Gabriel* did so, and proved by coming round upon them again from the northward that Queen's Foreland was an island (Resolution Island).

Once more back at the entrance, the fleet was in the midst of gales and fog again. The devout seamen became doubly devout, and the "unworthy," of whom there must have been a few, though George does not mention them, had serious thoughts, as they strove day and night to keep their vessels from being smashed on the rocks. More than once they had to bend two hawsers together, to anchor in over a hundred fathom of water. Many terrible dangers did they run, yet God spared them and protected them. Miracles were wrought, Best declares, by "the Mighty Maker of Heaven, and our merciful God . . . whose name be praised for ever more."

CHAPTER VIII

THE THIRD VOYAGE IS CONTINUED

AS SHIP after ship forgathered with the Admiral near Queen's Foreland, it became clear that Frobisher's Strait was unusually full of ice. The *Gabriel,* after getting round the back of the Foreland, fell in with the *Francis of Foy,* who reported the *Thomas Allen* and the *Busse of Bridgewater,* after many days with the *Francis,* were now missing. The *Francis* herself was in a dire way. Her stem by repeated buffets with ice was so loosened she was leaking like a basket. Five hundred strokes of the pump in a two-hour watch were insufficient to keep the water down. Their men were worn out and they begged help from other ships, so that they could run in and beach her. They reported also that it was impossible to get up to the Countess of Warwick Sound. Some of the crew indeed became unduly vocal on the subject without having been invited, proclaiming they "would as lief be hanged when they came home, as without hope of safety seek to pass, and so perish among the ice."

But the Admiral, who was destined to be one of the founders of the navy ("upon which, under God, the safety of the Realm depends"), was not the man to "open his ears to the peevish passion of any pirate person," was concerned with carrying out what he had come

so far to do, "or bury himself in his attempt." He called his fleet together and sent his pinnaces to seek a harbour, when another storm came up behind them from south-southeast, driving some among the ice, where they were comparatively safe. Others put to sea and had a long, hard time of it, with snow drifted a foot deep under the bulwarks, and all the men's clothes sodden with damp so that there was much sickness and talk of giving up altogether.

Frobisher, however, was so far from giving up that he was away in among the ice, driving forward at the first gap and hailing his ships, such of them as he could see, to follow. On July 31st he had reached Countess of Warwick Sound and anchored there alongside of those hardy veterans *Michael* (25 tons) and *Gabriel* (20 tons), whom everybody believed at the bottom of the sea. Here, says Best in quaint fashion, they "welcomed each other after the sea manner with their great ordnance, and when each party had ripped up their sundry fortunes and perils past, they highly praised God, and altogether upon their knees gave Him due humble and hearty thanks."

Master Wolfall, their chaplain, a learned and godly man appointed by the Queen's Council to be their minister and preacher, made unto them a solemn discourse, pointing out their manifold mercies and declaring that anything short of courage and resolution would ill become them. This reverend gentleman must have been a person of sterling character himself and one well equipped to exhort such heroic men, for he was a parson with a good wife and children, a good and large living and fair reputation at home, yet he volunteered most cordially to come out on this perilous expedition in the hope of saving souls and reforming any infidels he might find in these foreign parts.

Nevertheless, the sermon over, no time was to be

spent in vain. The miners by this time had almost forgotten their professions, so occupied had they been with saving their lives amidst the ice. Captains Fenton, Yorke, Best, Carew, Philpot, and Pilots Hall and Jackman, were called in conference by the Admiral, and a gentleman of whom we shall hear more anon, one Master Selman, was appointed notary of the regions westward from where they then were, and was directed to "register the whole manner of proceeding in these affairs."

Captain Fenton had found what he deemed a good supply of the ore on Countess's Island, and the soldiers, miners, and gentlemen were put on shore. A muster was called, stocktaking was ordered, an inventory made out, and orders to each man were issued by the commanders. General directions for the guidance of those on shore were made out by the Admiral and proclaimed on the island "with sound of trumpet." The captains, attended by the gold-finers, prospected for ore and the miners set out to dig.

When the subject of a winter colony came up for discussion, however, it was now discovered, on referring to the bills of lading, that the west and north sides of their proposed fort had gone down in the *Dennis* or had been smashed while in use as fenders among the ice. Also there was found to be insufficient provisions for one hundred men. Captain Fenton agreed to stay with sixty men. But when the carpenters and masons were asked how long they would take to build up a smaller house for that number of men, they said eight or nine weeks. This was out of the question. They had four weeks at most to load their ore and sail before the ice froze them in. So after due discussion Frobisher decided to abandon the idea of leaving a colony there, and Master Selman set all this down in due order for the

benefit of Her Majesty, the Lords of the Council, and the shareholders.

Best speaks of all this from hearsay. His ship, the *Anne Francis,* the *Thomas of Ipswich,* the *Moon,* the *Thomas Allen,* and the *Gabriel* were outside, having a terrible time. When the wind was fair for the strait the fog was so thick they durst not move. When the weather was clear it was blowing a gale out of the west. And all the time the ice was besetting them. When it fell calm the tide rushed the ice about them suddenly. Poor Best lost sight of the other ships in the midst of these troubles. The *Moon,* a fly-boat, was lifted up and stove in by the ice. The *Thomas of Ipswich* and the *Anne Francis* had their false stems borne away and their sides "strucken quite through."

Now about the 8th of August, having had as much of this as they could stand, the captains and pilots of the *Thomas* and *Moon* came aboard of the *Anne Francis* to hold a consultation. They had lost sight of the *Thomas Allen* and the *Gabriel,* and they had had no news of the fleet for nearly three weeks. The question was: In view of the dreadful weather, should they turn about and go home, or should they court destruction by trying to get up to the anchorage? Was it not reasonable to suppose that the Admiral, with the rest of the fleet, having encountered the same insufferable obstacles, was now on his way home? How much longer could they with safety attempt the passage, seeing how the ice was forming about the ships each night already?

These weighty arguments were put forward and discussed by the assembled captains. Finally Captain Best, as the senior officer present, advanced it as his opinion that they could not return home without ascertaining the position of the Admiral. Such a scheme was not to be thought of. On the other hand, he pointed out, he had on board the sections and timbers of a five-ton pin-

nace, intended for the colony, and he proposed that this boat be put together and he would try to reach Countess's Sound through the ice in her.

Without being enthusiastic, the others agreed to this, but insisted that they must find a haven in order to refit. Best agreed. They might find some other disabled ship. They were to keep one another company "as true Englishmen and faithful friends," and on finding a haven they were to assist each other in building the pinnace.

Before returning to the *Thomas of Ipswich,* Captain Tanfield mentioned to Best that "he did a little suspect his pilot Cox of heading a party among his crew to quit the fleet and go home. He said in his opinion the man had "neither of honest duty, manhood nor constancy."

Best himself, as became a true leader, was off at once in a ships-boat, with the *Moon's* skiff to keep him company, to seek for a haven under Hatton's Headland or possibly sight of the fleet. And eventually he found what he calls "a great black island" which not only afforded some shelter, but was so full of the same ore they had taken to England last year "that if the goodness might answer the great plenty thereof, might reasonably suffice all the gold gluttons of the world." This island he called Best's Blessing and returned with the good news to the ship, much to the joy of the crew.

Captain Tanfield, be it said at once, had not been mistaken in his estimate of his pilot, Master Cox. During the night the *Thomas of Ipswich* lost company of the others and in spite of the captain's wishes, the crew, having been won over by Cox, set a course for home. Due examination before the Lords of her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council proved this to be the case. We see here the beginnings of another tradition of sea service, inasmuch as to this day a sea officer's certificate of competency in the Merchant Service is issued under the authority of the Lords of the Committee of

Privy Council for Trade, and to them he must give an accounting should his conduct under articles be called in question.

Here was Best, then, heading for his island, on the tenth day of August, the weather being reasonably fair, the ship's boat going forward sounding. Best indicates one of the most exasperating features of this coast of Meta Incognita. He says the sea bottom was exactly like the coast—all hills and hillocks and deep valleys. Sounding "over and over again, yet are you never the nearer to discern the dangers. . . . You shall sound upon the side or hollowness of one hill or rock under water and have 100, 50 or 40 fathom depth; and before the next cast, ere you shall be able to heave your lead again, you shall be on top thereof, and come aground to your utter confusion."

And so it was here under Best's Blessing the "*Anne Francis* came aground upon a sunken rock within the harborough, and lay thereon half dry until the next flood, when by God's almighty providence, contrary to all expectation, they came afloat again, being forced all that time to underset their ship with their mainyard, which otherwise was likely to overset and put thereby in danger the whole company." And it took two thousand strokes of the pump to get the water out of the ship, so damaged she was by the rocks. Luckily the little *Moon* came in safely and lay alongside, helping them right gallantly to prop up their poor battered ship with the mainyard.

As soon as he had his miners at work at the ore, Best goes exploring. He climbs to the top of Hatton's Headland, to see if the fleet were at all visible; he sets up a cross of stone, "in token of Christian possession," and a week later he and his brother officers chased and killed "a great white bear, which adventured and gave a

fierce assault upon twenty men being weaponed. And he served them for good meat many days."

On the 18th of August the pinnace was finished, but the carpenter who had done the job was extremely dubious about her seaworthiness. He had had to make his nails out of any old scrap, even the gridiron from the cook's galley, and he pointed out that she lacked some of her principal knees and timbers, being held together mainly by those same nails. In fact, he said that for himself, he would not go in her for five hundred pounds.

This characteristic display of pessimism, for nobody had invited the carpenter either to give an opinion or to go in the pinnace, nor had he been offered five hundred pounds, produced no effect on the captain in the long run, but it encouraged the other pessimists to lengthen their faces and shake their heads. The incident shows Best in one of his most fortunate movements. He describes himself, with charming candour, "as one not altogether addicted to his own self-will." He saw that if he acted stubbornly and in a bullying manner, it would be said afterward, should he fail, *"Lo, he hath followed his own opinion and desperate resolutions, and so thereafter it is befallen him!"*

So he called the Master and the best of his mariners together, and informing them how highly important it was to them all, but in particular to himself as the leader, that they should seek their Admiral. Moreover, they had no one on board of them who could assay the value of their ore. It appeared the same as the other, but to carry a shipload home without expert advice would be like bringing "so many stones." He therefore informed them that it was his intention to go in the pinnace, and asked them for their suggestions and advice whether he could count on ever getting through.

The pessimists now stepped back and others, grave enough but not entirely broken-hearted, said that with

care the captain had a chance. John Gray, master's mate of the *Anne Francis* came forward and volunteered to go with the captain. And just as some of the crew became weak when the carpenter uttered his lugubrious forecast, so now others followed Gray and said they would go. Seventeen of them were willing. Captain Best took with him also Captain Upcote of the *Moon*.

And the experiment proved more successful than even Best imagined it would. They had the sense to take the southerly shore, and the swift tidal current swept them along—"shot up" is Best's vigorous phrase—in a short time, some forty leagues. They then strove to work over toward the northern shore toward Countess of Warwick Island.

To follow this highly courageous pilgrimage on Best's own map is not easy, for Best was better as a leader than as a cartographer. His islands, sounds, and straits are sketched in with a singular disregard of detail. This may not have been altogether without design. Secrecy, which insisted upon a cipher for the distances and positions of the expedition, may have dictated Best's vague delineations, but the probable truth is that he possessed a certain exuberance of imagination which unfitted him for the making of accurate charts.

Hence he does not mark Gabriel's Islands, "a place so named within the Straits above the Countess of Warwick Sound." We have a pretty good notion of his position, however, because he says, immediately after making these islands, that they "had sight of the Countess's Sound, and made the place perfect from the top of a hill, and keeping the norther shore, perceived the smoke of a fire under a hill's side; whereof they diversely deemed." Best, remembering certain ambushes attempted by the natives with false flags and whitened faces, deemed it possible that here was another. Com-

ing in close, they saw tents but no ship, and even then Best was cautious. He feared some of the others had been cast away and the natives had gotten hold of their gear, "using it for a policy, to bring them likewise within their danger." Best resolves, if this turned out to be the case, to recover the flag and tents, "or else lose their lives altogether." But at length it became clear to the most doubtful that here was a gathering of Englishmen on the shore, watching their approach with interest. Well they might, for just as Best was afraid that the men ashore, having lost their ship, might rush his pinnace in a panic to get away, so those on land feared that Best's men were in extremity too, and as he naïvely puts it, "for in that case every man is next himself."

These precautions were wise but unnecessary. Keeping his frail craft offshore, Best hailed them after the manner of the sea, "What cheer?" The answer came back, "All's well," and thereupon there was "a sudden and joyful outshoot, with great flinging up of caps and a brave volley of shot to welcome one another."

Best describes this meeting with great animation. He is amazed at the warmth of affection with which these poor mariners welcomed each other after imagining all sorts of dire disasters. "Yet, to be short," observes Best, grandly, "as their dangers were great, so their God was greater. Here" (he hastens to add) "the company were working on new mines, which Captain Yorke, being here arrived not long before, had found out in this place, and it is named the Countess of Sussex Mine."

Best at once set forth to see Frobisher at Countess of Warwick Sound, for he was eager to have his own ore tested. Much of his satisfaction, he says, "It was supposed to be very good." A conference of the Admiral's council was held on board the *Aid* to decide on the plans for next year, which never came to pass.

Immediate measures included some local exploration, an attempt to capture a few natives to take home, and the building of a house by Captain Fenton on Countess of Warwick Island. And here, for a moment, the mists of time are parted, and these almost legendary beings who followed the great captain into the icy fastnesses of the north, stand before us in the guise of mortal men.

Two hundred and eighty-three years later an American naval officer, Captain C. F. Hall, visited Frobisher Bay and landed on Countess of Warwick Island, which was known to the Eskimos as Kodlunarn, or White Man's Island. Hall had never read the narratives of Frobisher's voyages and was without prejudice in hearing the native traditions. Their story was that ages and ages ago white men had come in a ship and taken away two of their women, who had never returned. In proof of this story of white strangers they showed the explorer, who lived among them for two years, many relics of the earlier visit. He saw pieces of brick, tiles, and wood. He reports the finding of "a piece of iron mineral, 19 lbs. in weight, like a round loaf of burned bread." It was in fact a "bloom" of iron, a relic of the "gold finers' " smelting so long ago. He beheld the house of lime and stone Captain Fenton built for the next year's colony. He discovered one of the "mines" of iron pyrites which Frobisher's men had sunk into the hillside, painfully digging out the worthless stuff to carry across the sea. And most wonderful of all he heard the tale of the five lost men.

These men, whose fate had given their commander so many days of anxiety and to whom he had written that moving letter, had spent the winters with their migrating captors. Later they had returned to the island and found the house, with its store of bells and knives, looking-glasses and whistles and pipes, with pictures of men on horseback and such like homely trinkets. It may

be some shipmate had also left a note or scrawl on the lime-washed walls. And then, the Eskimos told Captain Hall, the five men found the buried timbers of the fort which Best says were thus stored against the next adventure. They dug up those timbers and made a boat, with a mast and a sail, and set off for home. But it was too early in the season; the ice was too perilous in the sound, and they were never seen again.

Captain Hall's discovery brought to light one of the most remarkable cases of geographical confusion on record, and which may be touched upon before completing the narrative of Frobisher's third voyage. It reveals, not merely the tendency of human minds to follow one another in opinion, but also the firm faith the navigators and geographers of that day retained in the old chart of the brothers Zeno, whose imaginary islands we see in faint pencil on William Borough's chart of Frobisher's first voyage.

The error arose out of Frobisher recording his visits to "Frisland" before going west. Now on the Zeno chart, as may be seen, Frisland was an island, unmistakably large, right on the course for "Engroneland," or Greenland. "Iseland," or Iceland, was marked as a huge mass of land off the east coast of "Engroneland." As the years went by, and "Frisland" gradually merged in men's minds into Greenland, it was supposed that Frobisher had really discovered a strait in the coast of "Engroneland," or Greenland, and it became the fashion so to show it on the maps, as may be seen on Emery Mollineaux's Terrestial Globe, made in 1592, on the Peter Plancius Map (1594), Wytfliet's Maps (1597) the Barentz Map (1598) and the "New Map" (1600) and others. Davis had discovered, in 1587, the huge strait which bears his name, which was none other than that ever-stormy sea Frobisher had encountered after leaving "Frisland," he imagining Greenland to lie far

to the north. Frobisher was bent on getting through a strait into the Pacific, as Magellan had done in 1520. Davis, emulating Drake, went northward to get round.

Frobisher's discoveries, in fact, were practically lost to the world and Frobisher himself in danger of receding from the front rank of Elizabethan explorers until Captain Hall innocently stumbled upon the actual remains of the third voyage in what was then known as Lumley's Inlet, a name given to it by Frobisher's successor, Davis, when he passed that way while Frobisher was with Drake in the Caribbean (1586).

Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Frobisher's Strait, becoming smaller as the years passed, continued to be shown dividing Greenland's southern extremity from the mainland. "Frisland" disappeared and Iceland assumed its correct position more or less; but the confusion of names kept the geographers from identifying Frobisher's Bay with the "Streights" or Hudson's Strait with "The Mistaken Streights Trending to Cataya" on the early maps. Captain Hall's account of his discoveries on Todlunarn Island cleared the mystery. It placed in its true position the achievement of the man who was first in those stormy seas, who pressed westward before Hudson and northward before Davis, who attempted the first colony in northern America and who carried the first missionary to hold a Christian Communion of the English Church in the Western World.

CHAPTER IX

THE END OF THE PASSAGE

BOUT the time of this same celebration of Holy Communion, "the Divine Mystery, being the first sign, seal and confirmation of Christ's name, death, and passion ever known in these quarters" by our good friend and chaplain of the fleet, Master Wolfall, the Admiral was debating with himself and making sundry suggestions to his brother officers, how far he might venture to the westward before sailing for home. He was not content with what had been done this voyage. The unusual weather and the dispersal of the ships in so many directions had frustrated his plans for an organised cruise. He called a council and told the assembled captains and gentlemen his desire to make the attempt.

The captains and gentlemen expressed their opinion emphatically that what the Admiral proposed was "very hard and invincible." They pointed out that already much had been done in exploring the "Mistaken Strait" and the islands lying therein, and their achievements would make a good showing when adequately set forth to the Privy Council and the shareholders. They had to point out that what he suggested was "very impossible," that they ought to be going, what with the dark fogs, the snow now falling continually, the gales dragging the anchors and the ice nightly forming about the hulls. Having painted a future with the most

gloomy foreboding and evoked an atmosphere of profound despair, these very human Englishmen informed the Admiral that in spite of all this, whatever he commanded, they would take the enterprise in hand.

We can imagine Frobisher, at the head of the cabin table, listening to one and another and watching them while they held forth. Stores had been damaged and lost. The liquor, wine and beer, had been stove in by the coal and timbers on top of them, and there was a chance of starvation before they got home. And so on, and so on. The tale of woe went round among those bearded, frost-bitten "captains and gentlemen." There was no doubt about it. They wanted, very much indeed, to go home.

And the Admiral, cutting short their protestations of allegiance to his desires, appointed a day—the last day of August—for departure, ordering them to have their ships loaded and ready by that time. He then ordered out his pinnace and set forth by himself to survey the passages among the islands aback of them. Behind Best's diplomatic record we can sense a certain brusqueness in Frobisher's attitude toward his captains and gentlemen. There had been brushes now and again during the voyage. Chief-Pilot Hall had been a little too aggressive in announcing his complete and irrevocable decision that they were up the wrong strait when the Admiral was not fully convinced. Hall had been right, and it is not invariably a sound policy for a subordinate to be too vociferously right, especially with a commander as strict as Frobisher. It is a pity Best's delicacy prevented him from giving us a few of these debates in detail, including Frobisher's own vigorous phrases. Frobisher, on emerging from the general history of the time and showing himself in the round, as it were, is often in a towering rage. It would not do to suppose from this circumstance that he was there-

fore a man of interminable animosities. He was impatient. He was irascible. He was incapable of concealing or dissembling his emotions when roused. But he must have had a singular faculty for leadership or the "captains and gentlemen" who paraded their pessimism at the council table would have been in open mutiny at the prospect of remaining in such terrible circumstances any longer. The times were stern. The example of Drake, who beheaded Doughty on the deck of his ship, and of Magellan, who executed and quartered two of his mutinous captains off Cape Blanco, give one the measure of the men who carried out these heroic voyages. Frobisher seems to have had in him not only greatness, but a human quality which made men curse him and love him, grumble at him and toil for him. They may have feared the inevitable consequences of insubordination, but they did not fear the man. This would account for the conduct of those men who dropped out and went home. It would account for the sullen attitude of Hall when he set down to write his own account of his behaviour. Hall was a competent man with a grievance, and the recriminations and counter-charges arising out of the third voyage are largely understood by those who have been cooped up for long months on board of a ship with shipmates not overly congenial. Best mentions that when in Beare's Sound, he and others were ashore in pinnaces getting men and gear aboard, and a gale blew up and prevented them regaining their own ships, the Admiral ordered them aboard the other ships for the time being. Best adds, with feeling, "But their numbers were so great, and the provisions of the bark so scant, that they pestered one another exceedingly." And without conscious art Hall conveys to us an indelible impression of a faithful and cantankerous officer defending himself from the criticisms evoked by his own difficult character. He

was occasionally professionally at loggerheads with the master of the *Ann Francis,* Best's prime favourite, and it is the most difficult thing in the world sometimes to get two good men to agree. But it must never be overlooked that an expedition of extraordinary peril and difficulty was carried out under Frobisher with scarcely any defections, only a few deaths, and only one serious foundering. This record may be credited to the famous "strictness of discipline" which is one of the few things the general historians have deigned to remember about Frobisher; but it is not improper to add that strict discipline is useless without first-class leadership and competence among the officers. Orders have a way of becoming very dead indeed unless there is a man behind them. And Master Hall, good pilot and resourceful lieutenant as he was, might have proved a disastrous leader.

He would have been a hard-bitten man who envied Frobisher his responsibility as the fleet put out to sea, homeward bound. As though to test men and material to the very limit, an interminable gale came on, with half the ships outside and the remainder driving on the rocks in the harbour. The *Aid* lost her anchor and Pilot Hall had to run out to mid-channel and lie to until morning, with rocks on one hand and driving ice close by on the other. Twenty boats and pinnaces were lost during this storm and several men washed overboard. A peculiar problem arose. The ships inside were so crowded that provisions would soon give out. Frobisher, his own ship gone out to sea, decided at once to go after them. He boarded the faithful little *Gabriel* and departed. The *Michael* followed, towing Captain Best in his pinnace. The *Ann Francis,* which was out under command of her master, John Gray, was admirably handled, and Best sets all captains a notable example in giving credit to a highly competent executive.

Gray, although the rest of the fleet had spooned away before the gale, had managed to lie to outside, waiting for his captain and the admiral to come out. The *Michael* brought the pinnace—that same kneeless pinnace which Best had put together with nails made out of shovels and trivets and gridirons, in which the lugubrious carpenter would not have sailed for five hundred pounds—alongside of the *Ann Francis,* loaded with men. The towing must have done for her, though the carpenter probably bragged to the end of his life of her marvelous stanchness. She lasted just long enough to let the men embark, leaking horribly, and then, as she dropped astern, she "shivered and fell in pieces, with all the poor men's furniture. . . . But as God would, all the men were saved."

Nevertheless, the fleet all got home. It was marvelous, says Best, "how the *Busse of Bridgewater* got away." She was left alone in Beare's Sound, and could not get out in face of the gale, and she actually made her way out northward through an unknown channel behind the island into the northern part of the strait. "A very dangerous attempt," opines Best "save that necessity, which hath no law, forced them to try masteries."

The *Busse,* however, was not done with marvelous exploits. On the way home, believing doubtless, that after such a miraculous exit from the jaws of death she was reserved for great things, she sighted an island which had never been seen before and has never been seen since. It may be found on William Borough's map, a round, dark, small object, east and a little south of Greenland. Best gives the latitude 57½. He also says, though he knew nothing about it, that the *Busse* sailed along the coast of a "fruitful land full of woods, and a champaign country." A passenger on board the *Busse,* however, one Thomas Wiars, is quoted by Hak-

luyt as saying the island was heavily encumbered with ice and was merely seen from a long way off. It was, no doubt, an enormous floating island of ice. But the description was so circumstantial that when the island was found to be no longer existing, the theory arose that an earthquake had submerged it, and it continued to adorn the maps as "The Sunken Island of Busse." Sir John Ross, who explored those waters in our time, sounded all over the position given by the *Busse,* and found no bottom nearer than a hundred and eighty fathoms. The Island of Busse was either ice, or an optical illusion, or the coast of Greenland at an unfamiliar point.

Of the return voyage we have no detailed account and indeed it is likely that the prevailing winds, once they were clear of the ice, brought the fleet quickly homeward. It is curious, at first sight, that the ships, about October 1st, "Thanks be to God . . . arrived safely in England, some in one place and some in another." But the fact is obvious that the chartered ships would make for their home ports. The *Busse of Bridgewater* would make for the Bristol Channel; the *Thomas of Ipswich* for the North Sea. After such a voyage these mariners and gentlemen and miners would want to reach their families at the earliest possible moment. And perhaps because of this scattered arrival there was no great noise made to celebrate the return. Great events were pending. All men were watching what the Queen would do.

But the moment the Admiral arrived in London the venturers involved him in a turmoil of charge and countercharge. The reputation of the ore previously brought home had suffered during the summer, from the quarrels of the fraudulent assayers. There was needed money at once to pay off the crews. Christmas was coming. To the stupefaction of the venturers, instead

of being invited to Plymouth or Deptford to peer down into the holds of ships loaded with yellow gold, they were requested to put up more money. Human nature could bear no more. They turned on one another, on Michael Lock, on the crews and pilots and captains. They accused everybody of every conceivable crime and negligence. The Company of Cathay was thrown into a receivership. Thomas Allen, who was no doubt the owner of the ship of that name, was the unhappy official. He found himself in a hornet's nest at once. Charges and recriminations flew about his head. The Council issued orders that the venturers were to pay the ships off or lose their rights in the Company. Nothing happened. The bubble had burst. Nobody believed in the ore any longer. That peculiar state of mind on which all commercial enterprises depend, that "moral" of the investing public, was no longer to be found. With lengthening features the good Michael Lock, whose imagination had inspired the whole sorry farce, found himself stranded with the dead and putrefying corpse of the Cathay Company in his arms. It was a bad time for Lock. He pleaded in vain at court. He twisted and turned to get out of his obligations and finally he discovered that Captain Frobisher was the real criminal. Disgruntled members of the expedition who had probably felt the lash of the Admiral's tongue began to bleat out their grievances and relate his crimes. So came into being that remarkable statement of "The Abuses of Captain Frobisher against the Company." The extraordinary leader who had risked his life, his reputation as a navigator, and all the money he had been able to scrape together, was accused of every reasonable and unreasonable dereliction of duty. He was charged with errors of incredible insignificance, with the conduct of a madman, and with the dishonesty of a thieving scullion.

CHAPTER X

THE IRISH ADVENTURE

HE Admiral was now entering upon one of the most difficult periods of his life. It was, indeed, the dark hour before the dawn. Michael Lock, with his fifteen children and their mother crying for bread, was in the Fleet Prison for debt, and Martin Frobisher, rescued from a similar ignominy by friends at court, and that "fair chain of gold" his royal mistress had thrown around his neck, was not having a particularly happy time. The Cathay Company had collapsed; he was without means and without employment. He had, moreover, to face the music at home. Here follows the probable cause of much of Frobisher's burst of sudden anger when things went wrong at sea.

At the beginning of his northwest voyages Martin appears before us as an adventurer, a man with a dubious past, the character of an intrepid seaman, but with very little money. It is to be recalled that even a bottle of aquavitæ was charged to Lock. But at some period between the first voyage and the third—most probably after the first voyage, Frobisher, a tall, strong sailor of thirty-eight or nine, married an elderly Yorkshire dame, the well-to-do widow of one Thomas Riggatt of Snathe in Yorkshire, "a very wealthy man." Her children were married and she probably fell in love with the big famous Yorkshireman who was just

home from discovering the new passage to the Indies. We know very little about her. We would know nothing, probably, had she not been left by her husband in great distress, so that she was constrained to write to Secretary Walsyngham to help her in her sorry need. It is not an attractive picture of the times that we discover here, but we are in no position to judge the Admiral harshly as a despoiler of women. It was the age, not the man; and it is not clear, from the dame's letter, that Frobisher was to blame for the poverty of his wife's grandchildren. It was the age of the Earl of Leicester and Amy Robsart, of Mary Stuart and Bothwell, of Walsyngham himself, who after a life of fanatical devotion to his Queen, was left to die in a scandalous poverty. That Frobisher had designed to squander his wife's fortune is unproven. He bought shares in the Cathay Company and the company failed. His wife, we understand, was left well off by her first husband. It is hardly credible that she had been left so that she became utterly indigent while Frobisher was away on his third voyage—a matter of four or five months. But she had married an adventurer, and England was full of men and women, in those urgent glamorous days, who were nosing about for a fresh start or had become submerged in the great mass of failures, who had put all into some venture, and who had lost.

> In her most lamentable manner sheweth unto her honour your humble oratrix Isabell Frobusher, the most miserable poor woman in the world that whereas your honour's said oratrix sometimes was the wife of one Thomas Riggatt of Snathe in the County of York, a very wealthy man, who left your oratrix well to live and in very good state and good portions unto all his children. Afterwards

she took to husband Mr. Captain Frobusher (whom God forgive) who hath not only spent that which her said husband left her, but the portions also of her poor children, and hath put them all to the wide world to shift a most lamentable case. And now to increase her misery she having not to relieve herself her children's children of her said first husband are sent into her having a poor room within another at Hampstead near London for her to keep at which place she and they are for want of food ready to starve to your poor oratrix intolerable grief and sorrow. Your oratrix humble petition is that whereas one Mr. Kempe Gent dwelling in the Wool Staple at Westminster gave his promise to pay her 4£ for the said Mr. Frobusher (which he will not now pay) that without delay he may pay the same or that it would please your honour to help her with some relief until Mr. Frobusher's return to keep them from famishing—and she according to her bounden duty will daily pray God, etc.

What Frobisher did does not appear. His domestic affairs do not loom large in the records. But that he could do much is improbable. It was the custom of the time to use a wife's dowry to finance one's business enterprises. Gilbert a year or two later was almost in the same situation. He writes to Walsyngham, who seems to have been the confidant of all the woes of Elizabethan England, that he had been "forced to sell his wife's clothes from her back" when his three ships were commandeered for the Irish Adventure and lost. And in the great smash of the Cathay Company, the old *Gabriel,* for which humble but soundly built bark Frobisher seems to have had an affection more durable than any woman could command, was ordered to be

sold by the receiver. She was appraised at £80. Thomas Allen writes to Walsyngham: "Mr. Frobisher hath bidden for her, but ready money is out of the way with him."

Martin, in short, was broke. He was forty-one and his career, some men might believe, was over. Indeed, this year 1579, with the collapse of the Northwest Venture, registers a period in Frobisher's life. He is done with the dour and invincible seas of the north. He has a recognized position as a commander of experience whose exploits have been marred by ill fortune. He has powerful friends at court, and implacable enemies in the City. He has, like many another gentleman-adventurer waiting in the antechambers of the great, a warrant for lands conferred upon him by the Queen, but which the courts will not sustain. And ready money "is out of the way with him." Martin turned to a man he knew and asked, not for a loan, but for employment. Strange to say, and it seems to prove that Frobisher was not held by responsible men to be to blame for the gold-ore fiasco of the Cathay Company—it was to a large shareholder in that defunct concern that he applied. Sir William Winter, one of the most trusted of the Queen's naval commanders, was taking a fleet to Ireland. Martin was given the *Foresight*. They sailed in early March, armed with the heaviest guns of the new arsenals, and anchored in the Shannon Estuary.

In 1580 Elizabeth had been on the throne of England twenty-two years. The most sanguine of her advisers were regarding the future with perplexity. A cynical observer might describe the entire span of the Queen's reign as the sustained struggle of an abnormal and undersexed woman to hide from the world the fact that for her marriage and maternity were impossible. The owner of one of the keenest brains in Europe,

Elizabeth had inherited a tainted and debilitated body. Her life was a series of prostrations from deadly diseases. At forty-six she had suffered from anæmia, dropsy, jaundice, small-pox, baldness, gastric trouble, chicken-pox, leg ulcers, amenorrhea, and whooping-cough, besides a "gumboil" which was probably acute pyorrhea. The extraordinary manner in which her temper took charge of her reason, and the astounding fluctuations of her orders to ambassadors and counselors, can surely be accounted for by the tragic heritage of a diseased body and a preternaturally active spirit. In a very real sense Elizabeth could not regard the struggle between Protestant and Baptist with the seriousness of a healthy and devout communicant. She was in hell most of her life, suffering extreme agony from inherited troubles and the almost incredible incompetence of her physicians. More than once it is probable, while hurling denunciations at her shrinking ministers or countermanding her own orders with the minatory arrogance of an absolute monarch, that she did not know what she was saying. She had the courage of a Tudor, the courage of a woman who had faced Death and seen him slink back into the shadows time and again. No one in her realm knew more than Elizabeth. No one had suffered more the extreme agonies of an alert mind in a brutal and bloody age. She had in middle life the indifference to the miseries of her common subjects which was inevitable to such a woman in such a position—the last absolute monarch of England. That she was at all times entirely sane is extremely doubtful. That her counselors did not sometimes rush out and commit suicide speaks well for the solidity of the English character. Their exasperation is naïvely obvious in their communications to one another and sometimes to the Queen. And at the time of the Irish Adventure, Elizabeth, by her own peculiar policies, had succeeded

in antagonizing every power in Europe. Scotland was in league with France. The States General were in despair over her eccentric habit of countermanding her open orders with secret messages. Spain was gradually becoming convinced that Elizabeth was a faithless heretic. And the Pope, in his rôle of a temporal power, had been induced by an English renegade to give him a commission to raise an army for the invasion of Ireland.

It is proper here, since Frobisher was thus employed twice in Ireland, to glance at the condition of that country in the sixteenth century. It is frequently assumed that the English in their demoniac lust for conquest were oppressing a weaker and neighbouring power. Ireland, as a nation, did not yet exist. The western island was regarded by adventurous young Englishmen as western Canada and South Africa are regarded to-day —a land of opportunity for the acquisition of employment and fortune. That the unhappy executives of the home government did not so regard it is very obvious from their reports. Ireland was already "the grave of reputations." But it is a mistake to imagine that Ireland had a native government which was competent to replace a foreign yoke. Ireland had no government at all save that of the clan, no leader save "earls" like Desmond, Fitzmaurice, and Tyrone, cattle thieves and raiders, who lived in unspeakable squalor, whose conception of justice was retribution, and whose unhampered exploits in the course of the next century would have depopulated Ireland far more thoroughly than Gilbert Grey and Wentworth combined.

England's interest in Irish "treason" was simple and direct. Catholic France regarded Scotland almost as an appanage of the House of Valois, and Scotland's titular Queen, imprisoned in England, had been Queen of France and was the hope of Catholic England. To

permit Catholic Spain to overrun Ireland in the name of Irish nationality would be suicidal for England and would complete the circle of her enemies. Even Elizabeth was aware of this danger, and once she could withdraw her infatuated eyes from the web of diplomacy in the Netherlands, she attacked the Spanish ambassador, Don Bernardino de Mendoza.

That courtly and cultivated grandee, well aware that Elizabeth's own soldiers had won the battle of Rymenant against the Spanish army of occupation, that Elizabeth's seamen were looting Spanish possessions in the Pacific, preferred to point out that the few boatloads of Spanish and Italian soldiers in Ireland had proceeded without either the orders or the knowledge of the King. Mendoza probably had the morals of his time, but he must have wondered what kind of woman Elizabeth really was and what were the principles, if any, on which she based her claims to consideration.

It turned out that the ambassador was right. Whatever may have been Philip's sympathies for such men as Stukely, Sanders, and Fitzmaurice, he was not likely to embroil himself further so far from home. It was all very well for the Irish clansmen to send word that the Irish were of the true faith, that they were of Spanish descent, that Ireland was ripe for Spanish dominion. He sent no army. A few ships with powder and stores were got ready, but the Irish soon perceived that if they were to drive the English out of Ireland they would have to do it themselves, with the added complication that more than one of the great clans, in their bitter enmity of the Geraldines, and the Scots, were siding with the invaders. The English, with the adroitness they occasionally reveal, gave the supreme command to the Earl of Ormonde, an Irishman and Desmond's hereditary foe. Sir Warham St. Leger, who was in command in Kildare, and who was mentioned by Fro-

bisher as a friend of Desmond in London in 1572, advised Cecil that the O'Neils would move to the north unless a strong hand took hold. This was in January. In March the army was moving westward toward Limerick and Winter's squadron was rounding the headlands of Kerry.

Sir William was by this time a veteran naval officer. By 1559 he was an admiral in Elizabeth's service, and he stands apart from both Frobisher and the west country sea dogs in that he was never either a corsair or a slaver. In 1559 he had received orders to invest the French forces in the Clyde, but to deny any commission from his Queen. His fourteen vessels proceeded across the bows of the anchored Frenchmen off Burntisland, and, declining to stop and give an account of himself when ordered, the French fired into him. Winter at once defended himself, captured guns, stores, and ships, and expressed amazement at being attacked by a friendly power. An officer so very much after Elizabeth's heart had no need to voyage in search of distant laurels. He seems to have been an excellent public servant. Cecil wrote from Scotland to the Queen that "of Mr. Winter all men speak so well I need not mention him."

Attached to the court, Winter was rarely out of employment. He had money to invest and took shares in the Cathay Company. Pastor Wolfall in Meta Incognita preached a sermon at "Winter's Furnace." Winter himself, in 1568, was organising and commanding a fleet of ships with money, powder, and arms for Prince Conde at Rochelle. In 1576 Elizabeth held Dutch ships in English ports. The Prince of Orange retaliated by seizing the English merchant ships in the Scheldt. The Queen, unable to comprehend why her allies should be bewildered at treachery when she practised it, and incapable of enduring it herself, sent Sir William Winter to get the valuable argosy released. Winter must have

been a successful diplomatist. He returned with the fleet and an apology.

Such was the commander under whom Captain Frobisher, in the *Foresight*, sailed for Ireland. Winter probably knew Frobisher's ability and circumstances. He seems to have been in a position to select his own men. Unlike Drake and the other west-countrymen no animus inspired his actions against the Queen's enemies. He fought with unimpaired skill against Spaniard, Frenchman, or Geraldine. He must have been an elderly hunk when the Great Armada came, but his ship fired five hundred balls into the Don, "never out of harquebus range and often within speaking distance," according to his own spirited report to the inevitable Walsyngham.

As usual, the Queen was under the impression that men lived on air, ships sailed without stores, and guns were fired with explosives to be picked up on the beach. The squadron, for lack of supplies, was hamstrung. By the usual miracle Winter fell in with a convoy and transferred in Cork. But Winter knew what the west coast of Munster was like in spring. He returned to his station, but sent Frobisher with the empty store-ships to see Walsyngham and explain that if anything was to be done he must have supplies. His letter, introducing Martin, said: "The bearer hereof, Mr. Furbisher, being a painful companion of ours in the voyage, will and is able to advertise your honour of all that has happened in our time of being here."

But while Frobisher was explaining that if you starve a seaman he can neither work nor fight, Winter's ships were getting foul of bottom in the deep harbours of Kerry. He could neither chase nor run away. Without waiting for orders he sailed for Plymouth to refit. And by some quirk of fortune the Spanish fleet with whom he was waiting to engage passed him in the night

Froude thinks the Spaniards had wind of his intending departure. But in the sixteenth century word could scarcely have reached Spain in such a short time.

Frobisher was having his own troubles with good Queen Bess. That august monarch's daily allowance for the men in her fleet was

In bread one pound	1 d.
In beef 11 pound	11 d.
In beer one gallon	1 d.

or fourpence in all. This is assuming that the beer, bread, and beef were of the best. This Frobisher denies and suggests that the contractors were making money out of the men's stomachs. It was no doubt true. But in the meanwhile Limerick had been occupied by Spanish and Italian soldiers and Winter was ordered back on station at once. The summer had been frittered away and no time was to be lost. On November 7th he was off Limerick. Lord Grey de Wilton was in command of the land forces. His officers included Edmund Spenser and Walter Raleigh, young Englishmen in search of adventure.

Froude, whose imagination often leads him into small absurdities, says that "Winter was old and cautious, forgetful of everything but the safety of his ships, and had felt his way from harbour to harbour in the intervals of moderate weather." This is strange news of a man who eight years later was in the thick of the Armada, laying alongside of Spain's mightiest ships of the line. Winter, making his way to Limerick, had a very heavy armament and it might well behoove him to use caution on that wild coast in November. He arrived, his guns were landed and trained on the fort beyond the sandhills. The next day the bombardment began and Sir William himself laid one of his guns and

destroyed the largest cannon in the fort. A white flag was raised and the siege was over.

"Then put I in certain bands who fell straight to execution."

In these words Lord Grey reports to his sovereign the slaughter of men and women, to the number of six hundred, who had given themselves up as prisoners. It is easy for us to feel horror at such a deed. But Elizabeth felt no such emotion. On the contrary, she seems to regret, in her letter to Grey, that the officers had been spared. Had she had the option "they would have served for a terror to such as might hereafter be drawn to be the executioners of so wicked an enterprise." Moreover, it is to be noted that Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, registered no protest. The Spaniards and Italians had been caught in a trap. They had had neither the skill nor the courage to fight. Their commission came not from Philip of Spain, but from the Pope. And neither Elizabeth nor any of her ministers, soldiers, or admirals would admit for a moment the right of the Holy Father to wage war. Lord Grey had told the envoys that they were pirates and could claim no terms whatever. And it is to be borne in mind that many Englishmen, like Winter at Burntisland, fought for Elizabeth on exactly those terms. They had to run the risk of being hanged as pirates or burned as heretics while the Queen, for policy's sake, coolly denied any knowledge of their enterprises. And if those enterprises succeeded, she as coolly accepted the glory, the power, and the profit.

That Frobisher and Winter had anything to do with this unhappy exhibition of "frightfulness" is highly improbable. They were in charge of the ships, and so far as we know, when Sir William went ashore to direct the gunnery Frobisher remained to direct the attack from the sea. It is true that Captain Bingham in the

Swiftsure, blames the slaughter of the prisoners upon mariners who had gone ashore to loot. But in the face of Lord Grey's report and the Queen's reply the statement sounds unsatisfactory. And Frobisher maintains throughout his recorded career the reputation of a humane man, extremely unlikely to join in such a foray. Grey's men had seen Huguenot cities in Flanders left by the Spaniards without a living soul within their blackened, smouldering walls.

The great adventure was over. The dreams of the gallant renegades who had haunted the courts of England's enemies, the plans of papal legates to win Holy Ireland for Spain, were gone down in disaster on the rugged coast of Kerry. The victorious armies proceeded upon a tour of extermination. The oft-suggested cure for Irish troubles—to kill "all Brehones, carraghs, bards, rhymers, friars, monks, Jesuits, pardoners, and nuns" and start afresh with the population of farming folk—was in danger of being put into operation. But Elizabeth, panic-stricken at the raids into her treasury which the "pacification" was causing, called a halt. Overtures to the survivors were made, Lord Grey shaking his head at such criminal softness, and the fleet was ordered to home ports. They arrived to find that Captain Francis Drake had come in from his circumnavigation of the globe, the hold of the *Golden Hind* deep laden with treasure to the value of a million pounds.

But Captain Martin Frobisher was once more out of a job.

CHAPTER XI

THE PRIOR OF CRATO

URING Elizabeth's dalliance with her Frog Prince, as she called him, Francis of Alençon, Don Henrico, the King of Portugal, had died, and Philip of Spain proceeded to annex that ancient realm. The Duke of Alva marched down the valley of the Douro to Oporto and a single engagement sufficed to place the entire Iberian Peninsula, the Portuguese East Indies, and the Azores, with all the vast carrying trade which the Portuguese had built up, at the disposal of His Catholic Majesty.

But so serious a shifting of the balance of power was not to be accepted by either England or France. A letter from an Italian business man to the great house of Fugger at Cologne, dated from London, March 5, 1580, is worth reading in this connection:

> A ship from Lisbon [he writes], which put in here in February, reports that the Old King is really dead and that the King of Spain is spoken of as his successor, though he has not yet been proclaimed. The Portuguese Ambassador is still at this Court, and it is not thought that the King of Spain will be so readily accepted. He will meet with resistance and fears the strength of the fortresses in Portugal, Africa, Barbary and at Calicut in Portuguese India. The Viceroy and the

officers in high command declare they would rather hand over their country to the enemies of our religion than to the Spaniards. Neither ships nor men are being got ready here, except for three ships destined for Ireland.

These last were, of course, Sir William Winter's vessels with Frobisher in the *Foresight* and Captain Bingham in the *Swiftsure*. And a fortnight later the house of Fugger was informed from London that "We hear from Portugal that the decision about the succession was entrusted to the Pope, to His Majesty the Emperor and to other Christian potentates. The Spaniards are successful in the war, but the war guilt must be laid to the account of the King of Spain."

The objection those same "Christian potentates" entertained for Don Antonio, Prior of Crato, the pretender to the throne of Portugal, was that he was illegitimate. For their own purposes, and to stay the intolerable domination of Spain as the paramount power of the world, Catherine de Medici, the Queen Mother of France, and Elizabeth of England, embraced the cause of Don Antonio. The complications inaugurated by this policy and the treaty with Portugal were largely responsible for the events which culminated in 1588 with the Great Armada. But at the beginning of the decade Spain had it all her own way. Don Antonio escaped from Portugal, where he had been living, as the Fuggers' correspondent says, "as a boor," and after visiting the Queen Mother in Paris, arrived in London with the crown jewels of the House of Braganza in his baggage.

The annexation of the open country and seaports of Portugal, however, was easier than the capture of the fortresses and outlying possessions. The Azores were then, as now, Portuguese. They lay in the direct route

of the Plate Fleets sailing from the Spanish Main to Cadiz. They declared for Don Antonio, and it was agreed even by the cautious Cecil that Elizabeth should support the exile in his claim to the islands. There was not a sailor in England who did not understand the enormous advantage of being able to wait in the Azores for the Spanish galleons.

Events had prepared the way favourably for such a scheme. Drake, now Sir Francis, rich and popular, though a number of high officers of state had declined his presents of looted treasure, was contemplating a fresh expedition. But he did not intend to lead it himself. The court party, knowing Frobisher's unemployment and aware of his ability, put him forward for the command. Henry Ughtred, a wealthy man of affairs, was behind this appointment, and Ughtred was a close personal friend of the Earl of Leicester. Drake, judging from a letter to Leicester dated October 14, 1581, was evidently in cordial agreement. He makes a series of proposals, suggesting finally that "if his lordship with Master Frobisher think best to have the little new bark and the two pinnaces he will bestow the like adventure therein; and upon their advice given will have the ship sheathed, prepared and furnished with sufficient provisions to their good liking. Whereupon he will gladly attend their answer herein, for that he is very desirous to show that dutiful service he can possibly do in any action his lordship vouchsafeth to use him, and for it he is willing to follow the direction of his lordship and Mr. Frobisher in every respect."

So far as could be seen, Frobisher would be away to the Spanish Main in command of a well-found squadron of three ships, and Don Antonio's troubles would not break his rest. The Earls of Leicester, Oxford, Pembroke, and Warwick were in it, Lord Howard, Sir Christopher Hatton, Sir Francis Walsyngham, Sir

Francis Drake, and, finally "Edward Fenton and his friends."

These last anonymous persons were the fly in the amber. They were City men, and the City men were determined to invest no money in a venture commanded by the man who—so they believed—had swindled them out of their money in the Cathay Company. They included Pilots Hall, Jackson, and Luke Ward, all of whom had gradually convinced themselves that they were the real leaders of the voyages to Meta Incognita. When the prospectus went to the City the names of the directors were impressive, but the City made it clear that they did not regard Captain Frobisher with any favour. Captain Fenton was appointed. Henry Ughtred, the principal financier of the court party, withdrew. Drake also lost interest, and he who was regarded as a pirate not only by Don Bernardino de Mendoza, the Spanish ambassador, but by the Queen's chief adviser, Cecil, became mayor of Plymouth. And Captain Frobisher had to look about him once again.

Ughtred, however, like most capitalists, was in touch with another scheme. It was a pretty scheme. It suited the temper of the times. Portugal was one of England's ancient allies, as she is to-day. Don Antonio was on his way to London, a king in exile. He was the natural enemy of the King of Spain. He might be a Catholic, but so were many good Englishmen. It was known at court that the Queen favoured his cause. And the scheme was nothing less than to equip a fleet for Don Antonio, with Don Antonio's money and join the French fleet already bound for Terciara in the Azores. The Plate Fleets were homeward bound.

But whatever Elizabeth's private feelings might have been, her first reaction to the news that Don Antonio was in town was characteristic. She expressed extreme indignation that a rebel "should approach her presence."

The fact is, Mendoza was on the point of asking for his passports, and Philip himself, the most sluggish and incombustible of monarchs, was about to burst into a flame of anger at the intolerable duplicity of the Virgin Queen. Her anger was an astute gesture for the benefit of the fuming Mendoza. Don Antonio, very much astonished, since a fleet was already forming on his behalf, was privately tipped off, and went into seclusion at Stepney. Like other diplomatists, he had to learn by degrees the extraordinary procedure which was Elizabeth's nearest approach to a straight line of action. She wore out everybody in Europe. In 1603, when this remarkable old lady, bald, and speechless with a septic throat, was confronting the Grim Reaper with unflinching courage, her enemies were nearly all dead. So were her friends. She descended into the grave with slow tortuous steps, deceiving the most intelligent of observers, so that they lost patience and forgot her. The habits of half a century were not to be broken. She died planning to overset the very inheritance which would solidify her realm, and nobody knows what her termagant spirit really wanted.

Don Antonio, a harum-scarum sort of person, if the Fugger reporters in Spain were any judges, popped out of sight in Stepney, only to pop out again and put the news into the right ears that Her Majesty was misinformed. He had not come to borrow money from her. He had security. The words, "treasure," "diamonds," and "jewels" were passed from lip to lip. They were words for which the Queen had preternaturally acute hearing. He applied for permission to purchase ships and was refused. Strange to say, he purchased the ships and fitted them out. Stranger still, as though some of the magic of Shakespeare's Prospero were abroad between Stepney Green and Whitehall Court, tiaras and sunbursts, worth something like half a million of our

money, reposed in the Tower beside the pearl-ropes and emeralds of the House of Burgundy. But Don Antonio knew perfectly well that such things as jewels were of small use to him who had no throne, and were well pledged for ships and guns with men to work them. With justifiable but indiscreet bravado Frobisher, with Don Antonio on board, sailed down the Thames with the Portuguese ensign over the poop, and joined Drake and Hawkins in Plymouth.

Trouble at once ensued. The Spanish ambassador was not the man to overlook what he regarded as encouraging an impudent rebel. Orders came from the Queen that the squadron was not to sail. Drake and Hawkins were so notoriously the scourge of Spain, their sentiments and exploits were so well known, their passion for "singeing his beard" the talk of every tavern in England, that they were peremptorily ordered to leave Don Antonio to his own devices. The ships remained in harbour, and Frobisher, as far as we know, stood by.

There was nothing else at the time for him to do. He had been unable to get legal possession of the estates conferred upon him by the Queen, and the reversion of a clerkship in the navy, to which she had appointed him, was entirely valueless until the actual incumbent, one "G. W." should die.

There are two reasons for supposing that Frobisher was with the small squadron which sailed from Plymouth the following year (1582) and, joining the French in St. Michael's, in the Azores, participated in the overwhelming defeat inflicted by the Spanish navy. We do not hear of him anywhere else and it was not an exploit which any competent seaman would be likely to publish abroad.

Catherine de Medici received the unhappy pretender once more, for he had been on the verge of penury in

England. She fitted out another squadron, under the command of Philip Strozzi, colonel-general of the French infantry forces, and in company with the Plymouth squadron of privateers, with Don Antonio on board, occupied St. Michael's at the moment when an Armada arrived commanded by Admiral Alvaro de Bassano, Marquis de Santa Cruz, the most able and efficient naval officer Spain ever had. It was one of the miracles to which Elizabeth owed her preservation that Santa Cruz died while the Invincible Armada was preparing for sea.

On this occasion, at St. Michael's, he made exceedingly short work of the French admiral. Cornered and desperate, Strozzi and his captains finally drove straight at the huge Spanish ships of the line and tried to cut their way out.

The records are silent concerning that "small squadron of privateers from Plymouth." So many "small squadrons" were slipping out of Plymouth and all the other ports of the west country in those tempestuous years. While their Queen, with a strange demoniac skill which some historians call miraculous intelligence, and others simple luck of a lunatic, was driving ministers, ambassadors, and sovereigns mad with her incalculable policies, the seamen of England were discovering that Spain was not invulnerable. Her ships could be boarded, big as they were, and her officers, like their pious and wooden-headed king, easily lost heart. Those small squadrons of ships of a hundred tons or so took long chances, and often the big galleons rode them down, burned them, hanged their crews to their own yardarms and sailed on to Cadiz.

But a curious allusion to this affair—which shows how it was regarded in Spanish eyes—some six years later comes to us out of the Fugger news files. One Cavaliere Fra Tiburtin Spanocchi wrote a long bump-

tious letter to the King of Spain. He plunges in to advise His Majesty just how to finish off these presumptuous English "corsairs." He is perfectly right about this, by the way. By the laws of international usage Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher were pirates, and well they knew that as pirates they would swing if Spain caught them. Later the Spanish devised the ingenious and horrible method of drawing their prisoners asunder by four boats. Spanocchi is voluble. He thinks of everything that may egg on the "colossus stuffed with clouts" who gazed upon a changing world from the chapel windows of the Escurial. And he remarks with relish that "The courage of the English at sea is nothing great, for in the engagement fought by the Marquis de Santa Cruz against the French off the island of St. Michael's the English vessels were the first to flee."

This may have been true, though no naval man could blame a privateer for getting out of a death trap when the French admiral and the Portuguese King were displaying appalling incompetence. Even with the Spanish outnumbering them two to one the pretender could have put up a better fight had there been a real sea officer in command. It just happened that they were facing the victor of Lepanto—for Don John of Austria was only the titular head and military leader in that great naval engagement—and Santa Cruz had them in the hollow of his hand from the outset.

Don Antonio, possessing a resiliency admirably adapted to the destiny of a royal exile, escaped to England. We hear of him continually in the course of the next dozen years. He is going to France, to Italy, to Constantinople, to the East to mobilize the Moluccas. Nothing in Shakespeare's fantastic comedies on the seacoast of Bohemia can transcend the Odyssey of the indomitable Antonio. Behind the great figures of the time we see him, not always in funds, stepping delicately

to the ears of busy secretaries and preoccupied capitalists; holding soldiers and sailors in animated argument in the antechambers of noble lords. The annexation of Portugal was the great Spanish Illusion. It looked so easy to the dull bigot of Madrid; but it was impossible. It was largely instrumental in bringing about the downfall of the Spanish empire. Portugal was indeed the Achilles heel of Spain from 1580 to the end of Elizabeth's life. By some singular twist of destiny, the political map of Europe, which has changed so much and so often in the last seven hundred years, has had one enduring frontier. Portugal, after extraordinary vicissitudes, is still Portugal, with many of her ancient heritages in distant seas.

In antagonizing an energetic and powerful community like the Portuguese merchants and seamen Spain revealed a stupidity characteristic of an arrogant and aristocratic government. It was, from the point of view of foreign politics, an amazing piece of folly. It led the English corsairs straight into the harbours of Spain. It gave them the valid excuse they needed for attacking the Don in every quarter of the globe. The millions taken out of Spanish bottoms in the last twenty years of the sixteenth century were a heavy price to pay for the tenuous hold of Spain upon the possessions of Don Antonio. And Martin Frobisher, like many another seaman on whom England leaned heavily a few years later, was glad to sail as a mercenary to harry the King of Spain on behalf of the Prior of Crato.

CHAPTER XII

SINGEING HIS MAJESTY'S BEARD

LIZABETH, in spite of letters of marque, in spite of the army in Flanders "in red coats and with the badge of the Queen of England," pursued her labyrinthine diplomacies and convinced herself, if no one else, that she was not really at war with Spain. Her interpretation of an unfriendly act varied with the personality of the actor. She had, by means of extraordinary duplicity, caused Philip to believe that her object in securing the cautionary towns of the Flemish coast was to hand them back to himself. Certainly the States General believed her capable of this stroke of *welt politik,* and displayed most justifiable reluctance to be eaten alive.

Spain was in no such quandary. Her ports from Bilbao to Cadiz were beset by swarms of reckless, merciless, and extremely competent privateers from England. Not a vessel was safe unless convoyed by ships of the line. Orders came from Madrid that the convoy for the plate fleet from Panama should be doubled. Rumour ran through the ports that "El Draque" was out. For once rumour was in line with the facts. Writing from Cologne on July 11th, the correspondent of the house of Fugger reports that "Drake the Corsair appears to have thirty well-found ships in England. With these he will lie in wait for the King of Spain's fleet return-

ing from India and New Spain." And again, on August 9th, "It is confirmed that Drake the pirate and his fleet are at sea . . . he has actually taken an island from the King of Spain and held up some fishing-boats off Terra Nova" (Newfoundland).

Here we see the magic and glamour of a name. About this time, so effectually had that remarkable man impressed himself upon the Spanish psychology that every successful privateer and corsair from England had his deeds credited to "El Draque." Drake, moreover, possessed one of the few English names which a Spaniard could pronounce.

The rumour, however wild in detail, was true in the main. Leaving to quieter hands his parliamentary duties at Westminster, the restless admiral found his work was not yet done. For once the reluctance of Elizabeth had been overcome by the inescapable facts of the situation in Spain. Sir Philip Sidney supported the scheme with money and influence. The Queen supplied part of the money, but the adventure was to be carried out as a piratical enterprise. If they failed they would be disavowed.

Nothing could have pleased Drake better. He collected his squadron of twenty-five vessels at Plymouth, and one Walter Biggs has left us an inventory of the personnel. The great family names of England are here. Sir Francis was in command. There is reason to suppose that Sir Philip, that very perfect gentle knight, was eager to assume the direction of this cruise. Drake had no such intention. He and Sidney were not the men to get on. Drake was scarcely of the temperament or the age to serve under any living commander. Standing rigging, say the seamen, makes poor running gear. Elizabeth recalled her favourite and he was reserved to give us that celebrated example of Christian fortitude and selfless courtesy on the futile field of

Zutphen. Sir Francis was in command, and Captain Martin Frobisher, "a man," says Biggs, "of great experience in seafaring actions, who had carried the chiefe charge of many ships himself, in sundry voyages before, being now shipped in the *Primrose,* a ship already famous." The character of the men who commanded and manned the English merchantmen of the day is adequately revealed in the story of the *Primrose* of London, discharging in Bilbao, in the north of Spain. The corregidor of the port came on board and was received amiably enough by the captain. Taking that unsuspecting officer by the arm, he informed him that he was a prisoner. Captain Foster flung the Spaniard away from him, sprang to the pooprail, and bawled a stentorian warning to his crew. Instantly the men swarmed out, seizing belaying-pins, pikes, hatchets, axes, and pistols, and hurled themselves upon the Spanish soldiers. The latter found themselves flung into the sea, bundled into their boats, or slain outright on deck. The cable was cut, sails hoisted, and the *Primrose* was under way. The corregidor himself, the principal officer of Gallicia, was found hanging to a rope over the side. He was hauled up, made a prisoner, and carried to London.

It is easy to imagine the furore such an arrival would cause in Elizabethan London. This was June, 1585. Frobisher, at that time employed at the admiralty and probably living near Hawkins in Cripplegate Ward, was no doubt one of the first to go down and hear the tale from Captain Foster himself. There was the Don in person, the actual corregidor of Gallicia, fished up on the end of a line and captured. He had had the nerve to lay hands on an English shipmaster. We have no picture of Foster, but the immortal gesture of the man flinging the Spaniard's arm from him and rousing his crew with a western ocean shout, is sufficient

to indicate his character. It is men like him who make a navy, peaceable, efficient, but everlastingly vigilant. Frobisher, who had been occupied for some time in reconditioning the Queen's ships under Hawkins, would get on with such a man. Maybe, too, Will Shakespeare, just in from Warwickshire lanes, a vigorous warm-eyed lumpkin of a youth of twenty-one, on his way to visit his brother in Southwark, would hear of the *Primrose* coming in and would go and see her. So far as we know, Shakespeare never saw either a ship or the sea before he came to London, and he had to gain his knowledge of navigation somewhere. Or he may have heard the captain telling his friends in a tavern. It was a tale worth going far to hear. Perhaps the captain expanded it a little. Certainly what the corregidor declared before Sir Henry Killignew failed to tally exactly with Master Foster's assertions. "Three or four pinnaces with thirty men apiece," stated the latter. "Two boats with perhaps thirty men in all," countercharges the corregidor, and probably he was near the truth, since he commanded them and had no motive to exaggerate.

But the influence upon public opinion in such a crisis is controlled not by the facts, but by the idea and the emotion. It set the heart of maritime England on fire. The Dons were coming out in their true colours at last. The "colossus stuffed with clouts" was revealing his true dastardly character. Was England to sit still and endure this intolerable bullying? Where were those popish plotters who said the Spanish were harmless Christian folk shamefully used by Drake and his "corsairs"? Here were English ships peacefully discharging corn to starving people in Spain, and their King throws our men into prisons, sends them to be chained with Moorish and Turkish slaves at the galley oar!

Christopher Carleil, a veteran of land and sea affairs, who had married Sir Francis Walsyngham's daughter,

was appointed Lieutenant-General of the military forces. The total number of men, soldiers and mariners, was 2,300, constituting one of the largest squadrons of privateers England had as yet sent to sea. All the young men of the court were hot to go. Among the names of captains of companies, of what we now should call mariners, were those of Edward Winter, Thomas Vennor, Francis Knollys, Thomas Drake, George Fortescue, John Varney, and Richard Hawkins.

The news of this the most formidable squadron ever fitted out for a naval offensive upon the Spanish plate ships spread over Europe with remarkable swiftness. That it lost nothing in the telling is already apparent by the Fugger correspondent's statement from Cologne. Drake, if we are to believe the rumours flying around the commercial centres of Europe, was everywhere. He had captured an island off Spain and had held up fishermen off Newfoundland. And it is worth noting that Fugger's correspondent at Antwerp, after reporting that commissioners were coming over to negotiate a general peace with the Duke of Parma, adds that "The Queen asserts she never gave Drake orders to make these attacks upon places belonging to the King of Spain. This occurred at the instance of Don Antonio." The Prior of Crato here comes in most conveniently for Elizabeth. She was actually the largest stockholder in this expedition. She had given it her personal attention. She had sent the Spanish ambassador, bag and baggage, out of the country. She had an army of uniformed soldiers on active service in the Netherlands against the Spanish Army of Occupation. She had caught regicide after regicide who had attempted her life. And yet this amazing woman had the nerve to declare, and the dexterity to convince astute men of affairs that it was true, that she had nothing to do with Drake's improper behaviour.

Frobisher must have regarded this new adventure with the deepest satisfaction. He had never sailed with Drake, but he would be fully apprised of the reputation of the great circumnavigator. It is unlikely that two men of such experiences had not compared their voyages on either coast of North America. Miller Christy, in his dissertation upon the Silver Map of the World, a medal struck to commemorate Drake's voyage, suggests that Frobisher had informed Drake of his discovery of the supposed sea passage to Cathay. This is possible and probable. How two men so opposed in character, training, and convictions would work together no one could have conjectured. Martin, after so many disappointments and setbacks, was in no mood at this time to rake up old disagreements, if any had existed. He had two vitally important duties to himself to perform. He had to take part in a successful adventure and he had to make some money. He was forty-eight years of age, in the full vigour of his powers, but he had not yet been singled out by fortune to perform a deed which would ring through England. Drake had done this. Frobisher, however, never could have entered into Drake's fanatical animosity toward the Spaniards. So far as we know, Frobisher, to the day of his death, was an Englishman, a sailor, and a soldier devoted to his Queen and country. He was knighted for his work against Spain. He was killed fighting against Spain. But of any personal feeling in the matter he leaves no record. Neither in a religious nor moralistic sense had he Drake's bitterness against a particular enemy. It was enough for him that the Queen's most excellent Majesty had given him his orders.

But at the time of Drake's armada sailing to harry the King of Spain, Frobisher was obsessed with the desire to restore and solidify his own personal fortunes.

No quicker method existed than to serve as vice-admiral to the greatest sea-leader of the day. We are justified in attributing much of the snap and vigour of the early part of the cruise to Frobisher's energy as vice-admiral. And for once Drake had slipped away without a Doughty or a Borroughs to capsize his plans and foment mutiny among his crews. He had all the advantages of being a privateer and all the authority of a naval command. Fortune favoured him mightily. He arrived off Vigo, having captured a Spanish ship loaded with fish caught on the Newfoundland Banks, and proceeded at once to attack the small town of Bayon.

The landing parties from the ships, which were anchored among the islands, were met by a boat from ashore. A messenger, an English merchant of the place, had been diplomatically sent to discover the intentions of the fleet. Drake was in his galley with the boats, and after an interview the merchant was sent back with Captain Sampson, one of the corporals of the field, to obtain from the governor a satisfactory answer to two questions. First of all, Drake wished to know "if there were any wars between Spain and England." Secondly, "Why were our merchants with their goods embarged or arrested?"

The narrative of Master Walter Biggs, who commanded a company of musketeers under Lieutenant-General Carleil, which Hakluyt has incorporated in his *Voyages,* is explicit upon the astonishment of the governor and his townsmen. While Sampson was on his errand the English forces were drawing nearer and nearer the town. Carleil advised this course so that in the event of hostilities they could make a sudden attack before dark.

The Governor's answer was a characteristic evasion of far-away Galicia. Cut off by mountain ranges from the rest of Spain, the people of the northwestern prov-

ince have retained to this day a dour, dogged, and somewhat Bœotian reputation. It probably took a good week to reach the capital from Vigo or Bayon. The Governor said "he knew of no wars, and that it lay not in him to make any, he being so mean a subject. And as for the story of the merchants with their goods, it was the King's pleasure, but not with intent to damage any man. And that the King's countercommandment was that the English merchants with their goods should be discharged." To prove his good will, the Governor sent the Englishmen then residing in the town with his reply.

By this time, however, Drake and his boats were hard upon the town and forthwith landed. The Governor, with the most excellent intention, sent refreshments, including such gratifying additions to the table as new bread, wine, oil, apples, grapes, and marmalade. The intention was probably to remain, but at midnight the sky became overcast, the wind was rising, the orders were given to return. Frobisher, in command of the fleet, had his hands full. The gale increased, and for three days ships were dragging their anchors and running out to sea. The *Speedwell,* a small vessel, was driven so far out she could not get back, and so returned to England.

But the moment the storm was over Carleil was out with his boats and pinnaces exploring the estuary above Vigo town. The whole fleet presently moved up to a safer anchorage, and, the formalities being concluded, Master Carleil set out "to see what he might do above Vigo."

Evidently not much, for the principal booty was a boat laden with the copes, stoles, plate, and a huge silver cross double-gilt, from the church at Vigo. This allusion in Walter Bigg's narrative to the previous losses of this town indicate that the small pirates and priva-

teers from England had been paying frequent visits. Vigo was one of the nearest ports to Plymouth and Bristol. Thirty thousand ducats' worth of various kinds of goods they claimed to have lost.

This was small beer for a fleet of twenty-nine sail and Drake prepared to move on. Moreover, the Governor of Galicia had mustered a couple of thousand men on shore and asked for a parley. Drake said drily he would talk while on board. Frobisher went in his skiff and brought the Governor alongside Drake's skiff.

The discreet language of the chronicle seems to conceal a powerful discourse by the Governor of Galicia. They agreed to take on fresh water, paying for all they received, and to depart. This seems most strange behaviour for Drake—"El Draque," the man who had sworn eternal enmity to Spain. But the probability is that Drake, seeing nothing in that somewhat poverty-stricken region to fight for, and being eager to reach the islands so that he could intercept the plate fleet, was in no mood to wage needless war. Perhaps, moreover, the rescued English merchants had given the Galicians a good name as to treatment of foreigners. It is too easily assumed, after the lapse of centuries, that the adversaries in great wars were uniformly inspired with conventional animosity toward each other. We know that in our time such is not the case. A Galician was not regarded with the same dislike evoked by the domineering and boastful hidalgos of Castile and Arragon. Even Drake would not be disposed to view the Governor sitting in his Vice-Admiral's skiff as responsible for the perfidy of the Spaniards at San Juan de Ulua twenty years before. With so many ships and men fresh water was a constant preoccupation for the leader. Men had arrived home with the loot of great galleons in their holds, but with their healths permanently destroyed by drinking rotten water. Drake himself, in

fact, died of dysentery of the same origin. They filled their water-casks, chicken crates, and pigpens and sailed south for the Canaries.

It is obvious from the chronicle that the fleet looked forward to landing in those islands and taking their ease and pleasure in one of the most delightful spots in the world. The even temperature, without either rain or excessive dryness; the fertility of the soil which produces subtropical and tropical fruits in abundance; the celebrated wine which gave Falstaff his high colour; the romantic beauty of the highlands, with Teneriffe just visible sixty or seventy miles to the westward—must have become known among those English sailors who had been, like Frobisher, Drake, and Hawkins, in on the West Coast slave trade. Even to-day it is a port of call for ships after navigating the Niger and the Congo. To Frobisher it should have seemed a vision of Paradise after the rigours of his northern voyages. In this, however, we may be wrong. Nowhere in the course of his active sea career of over forty years did Frobisher reveal any consideration for bodily ease and comfort, save (as we have seen) that he liked spirituous liquor in moderation. Never was there a man who fancied "silken dalliance" and soft living less than this Yorkshireman. When the opportunity served he spent a year in Yorkshire attending to his property and acting as justice of the peace at Altofts. But the languorous climate of the lower latitudes seems never to have appealed to him. So far as we know, he never crossed the line into the southern hemisphere. After the adventure of the Northwest Passage his ambitions crystallised into a diamond-hard determination to achieve some tangible success in the world. His loyalties were for the Queen alone.

The high hopes of the crews were disappointed, however. Walter Biggs reports their arrival at Palma. The only available landing-place was guarded by heavy

guns, some of them sixty-pounders, and several ships were hit. Again Drake decided against losing men in a futile attack. He sailed across to Ferro, one of the smallest of the islands, where it was obvious that the inhabitants were too poverty-stricken to be worth looting by an army of a thousand men.

It is not explained why the largest two islands were left unvisited—Grand Canary and Teneriffe. It is possible that Drake wished to move forward as far as possible without too much publicity. We have seen how Fugger's Cologne correspondent reported Drake on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland, and it may have suited Drake's mood and plans to have the merchants of Spain believe him there after he left Vigo. The behaviour of the squadron in the islands was very unlike either Drake, Frobisher, or Carleil. Biggs being a soldier and an officer of inferior rating, it is not an extravagant surmise that he was not in the Admiral's confidence. Even Master Thomas Cates, who eventually published the manuscript, completed by another adventurer when Biggs died outside Cartagena, bore no official authority for his editing and arrangement.

There is another hypothesis to account for Drake's deliberate progress. A squadron of twenty-five ships, merchantmen for the most part, destined to take part in actions against Spanish ships of the line, would need time to become disciplined in fleet manœuvres. Drake himself had never commanded so many ships. Upon Frobisher, the naval executive, fell the responsibility. It is highly probable that during these actions involving no great peril of life or ships the commanders were drilling their heterogeneous elements into some sort of efficiency. The weather was in general fine, as is often the case in November and December in those waters, and neither Frobisher nor the Admiral cared to think what so many ships might do to one another with green

crews if they should fall in with one of the seasoned armadas of Santa Cruz.

Saturday morning, the 13th of November, found them off Cape Blanco, "low land and shallow water." They exchanged courtesies with some French men-of-war in the bay behind the cape, and on the following day proceeded southwestward to the Cape Verde Islands. On the 16th of November, while messengers were flying to and fro between London, Madrid, and the Low Countries, while the Spanish Council of State sat in a daze at the news from Vigo, the fleet anchored between Porto Praya and Santiago, on the island of that name, and landed a thousand men.

Lieutenant-General Carleil proceeded to direct the attack through the night with considerable circumspection. He could hardly be expected to see into the minds of the Spanish authorities, upon whom so large a squadron of enemy ships must have had a depressing effect. They had selected, however, the sanest method possible of dealing with such a contingency. At daylight, when the army, assembled on the heights overlooking the town of Santiago in the narrow funnel-like valley, sent forward a company of scouts bearing the ensign, "which had nothing on it but the plain English cross," they found the town deserted. Without a shot being fired the English entered and flew the White Ensign from the fortress so that the fleet might see it. It was Elizabeth's coronation day, the 17th of November. She had been on the throne twenty-seven years. The Spanish guns were found ready loaded and were all shot off in honour of the double event. Frobisher in the fleet returned the fire. "It was strange," remarks Master Biggs, "to hear such a thundering noise last so long together."

A fortnight they remained in the town, a military occupation, "taking such spoils as the place yielded,"

mostly trash, according to Biggs; vinegar, olives, and oil, and neither treasure nor goods of worth. We have no means of knowing why treasure should have been looked for in the islands, and it is to be suspected that the leaders had no such hopes. Biggs, in fact, in this part of his narrative is unsatisfactory. He makes out the English forces to have been rather less than humane without telling a clear and comprehensible story. He accuses the natives of killing and mutilating a boy from one of the ships without explaining the circumstances surrounding the incident. He mentions a Portuguee who came out as a messenger with a flag of truce, asking if war had been declared between France, Spain, and England. To this entirely reasonable question from an islander, whose news from home was belated owing to the many seizures at sea, Captain Sampson and Goring saw fit to avoid a direct reply, suggesting that he ask it of Sir Francis himself. As he had no definite instructions, the Portuguee declined, having possibly heard of Drake's visit some seven years before. On that occasion, being bound in the *Golden Hind* upon that same famous voyage which took him round the globe, Drake had sailed into this port of Santiago de Verde and had taken out of his ship one Nuno de Silva, a Portuguese pilot familiar with the Brazilian coast. He had taken him clear round the Horn to the west coast and let him go at Guatulco. The Portuguese messenger in the present case not only retreated from any interview with "El Draque," but they never heard from him again.

The burning of the towns of Porto Praya and Santiago can scarcely be approved by our standards; but the object of the expedition was to despoil the King of Spain. Drake had sent a message to the Governor, who had gone up into the mountains, that if he did not come to a parley the towns would be destroyed. The

English commander was, so to speak, compelled to make good his word.

Biggs attributes the fear of the islanders to the "great wrongs they had done to old Master William Hawkins of Plymouth," some four or five years previously, when they slew many of Master Hawkins' men. The statement is vague. Very few men in the islands could have remembered the voyage of old William Hawkins in 1530, fifty-five years before. If Biggs was referring to young Master William Hawkins, brother of Sir John, it is difficult to see why he was brought into the case, since Drake himself suffered in that terrible day at San Juan de Ulua. Biggs, one fears, was vapouring. The many Portuguese, however, would all remember Nuno de Silva's kidnapping in 1579, and it must be borne in mind that de Silva had an unequaled opportunity to appraise the iron discipline and fanatical hatred of Spaniards aboard Drake's ships. They may well have felt, these islanders, that nothing they could do would diminish the misfortune which was impending, and so they kept away up in the hills. Only when a company of soldiers marched inland to the village of San Domingo and, finding it abandoned, marched back again, did any of the garrison appear. These, horsemen and footmen, stood afar off, "at gaze," as Biggs puts it, but on inaccessible points. And having burned the towns and filled his casks, the Admiral sailed westward for the Indies. Great scorn was felt by all for the craven spirit of the islanders, and some seamen, we are told, wrote their sentiments upon the wall of the hospital, which was preserved from destruction for that purpose. It is true that an English boy, as we have seen, was horribly murdered, and the burning of the town was a characteristic revenge.

It is possible that in burning Porto Praya and Santiago Drake did the islands an unwitting service. The

fleet had been a week at sea, bound for the West Indies, when men began to sicken mysteriously and die. During the eighteen-day voyage to Dominica, in the Leeward Islands nearly three hundred died of the plague. The symptoms, according to Biggs, were "extreme hot burning and continual agues, whereof very few escaped with life, and yet those for the most part not without great alteration and decay of their wits and strength for a long time after." "In some that died," he adds, "were plainly shown the small spots which are often found upon those that be infected with the plague." And after calling at Dominica, where the friendly Caribs helped them fill their casks in the river and gave them supplies of cassava bread and tobacco, the fleet put in at St. Christophers, an uninhabited island near by, and spent Christmas there, to the great refreshment and convalescence of the sick. The others, and it may be surmised that most of the mortality was among the soldiers, set to work to clean ship, hosing down the decks, opening all ports and cleaning the timbers of the foulness of a long voyage under fair weather, wherein the pumps were scarcely used. And here too the leaders held a consultation and laid their plans for the despoiling of the Spanish dominions.

These involved the capture of no less a stronghold than the great and glorious city of San Domingo in the island of Hispaniola, one of the oldest and most populous centres of Spanish America. The cool insolence of such a scheme would have appalled Cecil and Walsyngham had they known of it. Only the Queen herself, who had something of Drake's infernal braggadocio in her dealings with Philip, would have entered fully into the superb and reckless, yet calculated, daring of such a plan. In her England gained a great queen but lost a natural-born corsair.

Drake, who had been most of his active life in these

waters, knew San Domingo. He had not had Nuna de Silva on board for months without finding out many things concerning the great cities of the islands. He knew that the Spaniards had purposely left the dangerous surf-battered coast as it was when Columbus first sailed along Hispaniola, so that without a pilot none could enter. He needed a Nuna de Silva.

Luck was with him once more. Frobisher, scouting ahead, overhauled a small frigate bound for San Domingo and boarded her. One of the men on her was a Greek pilot who told the Vice-Admiral plainly that there was no taking of the city by direct assault, it being a barred haven and defended by a strong fortress. But he knew of a place some distance down the coast where troops could be landed through the surf. This they determined to do.

It was a calm evening as they bore up past the city and the last day of the year 1585. The soldiers were distributed among the pinnaces, ships, boats, and small craft. As New-Year's day dawned they began to go inshore at a small cove some nine or ten miles west of the city, and so disembarked.

An engraving of this action in Theodore de Bry's famous work published in Frankfort fourteen years later shows exactly what was happening at this time. San Domingo was a rough rectangle confined by the seashore on the southern side, by a wide estuary with a narrow entrance (blocked by a sunken galleon) on the east. To the north a river formed a natural moat for some distance, and the remainder of the circumvallation consisted of a formidable wall, carried down to the sea, with three castellated portals.

The English were now landing to the southeast of this wall, concealed from the city by several ranges of hills and wooded country. De Bry shows the boats going ashore beneath a forest of pikes. Pikemen in

dense formation are facing the gates defended by cannon. The northern gate has already been carried and the soldiers are spreading through the streets in the direction of the great plaza.

Drake and Frobisher, when Carleil and his men had landed, were making a feint attack upon the "barred haven," drawing the main defense from the walls. It was noon when Carleil arrived in front of the gates. A squadron of Spanish horse charged, but the long English pikes and musketry fire drove them into the city.

The Spaniards made the mistake of firing their heavy guns all at once. Carleil, dividing his force into two parties of five or six hundred men each, with Captain Powell in command of one and himself leading the other, made a sudden charge while the guns were being reloaded. "Pell-mell," says Biggs, "we entered the gates," sending the defenders stampeding in flight. Straight to the grand plaza, only three streets away, the victorious pikemen pressed, and Captain Powell, who had carried the middle gate with the same spirit and success, came rushing in to join them.

Immediately the streets leading into the plaza were piled up with barricades and sentries posted, the city being, as Biggs naïvely confesses, "far too spacious for so small and weary a troop to undertake to guard." Small they may have been, and weary, too, for they had been awake since the previous evening. Nevertheless, it appears they spent the evening preparing to carry the citadel. The garrison, however, hearing the Englishmen busy about the gates of the castle, abandoned it, some taking boats across the haven and some yielding themselves up as prisoners. The anonymous author of an account in the archives states that "within one hour space the English ensign set on the tower of St. Domingo."

The city was now practically in the hands of the in-

vaders and the population in general was not interfered with. For a month the English held the largest and most important place in the West Indies, city, castle, haven, and Spanish fleet. Drake, however, was in a quandary. So far from discovering a large and portable treasure which he could carry on board, there was not even the usual gold and silver plate in use. The mines in Hispaniola, by reason of the maniacal cruelty of the Spaniards exercised upon the mild and timid Indians, were no longer worked, for lack of labour. Biggs remarks, moreover, that the Spaniards had taken to using porcelain and glass. None of the conferences between the Spaniards and Drake could arrive at any agreement. Every morning two hundred sailors were employed in reducing the outer ring of buildings to heaps of burning ruins. The houses were "built very magnificently of stone with high lofts," and they "gave us no small travail to ruin them." It is a singular picture we have given us here of this diminutive army of invaders, barricaded in the heart of the city, sallying out each morning under guard of their soldiers to burn another street of houses. With all their toil they could only burn about one-third of the city, and Drake began to believe what the Spaniards had claimed from the first, that they had no treasure. They offered twenty-five thousand ducats if he would go away. Time was on their side. The English could not afford to wait until Santa Cruz sent a huge armada to scour the Caribbean. Frigates were flying in all directions already, bringing the news that Drake was at his old trade. Fugger's Antwerp correspondent reports on March 16 that "In Spain they are fitting out thirty large warships on which five thousand soldiers are to embark. They have to search for Captain Drake who has ostensibly gone to Peru." Drake had to be moving on. He accepted the ransome and prepared to sail.

His men, it is plain from the story of this intrepid exploit, were in an ugly mood. A negro boy was sent by Drake with a message under a flag of truce. Perhaps the boy, after the temperamental fashion of his race, displayed too obviously his satisfaction with the way things were going with his late masters.[1] The first Spaniards the boy met were army officers from one of King Philip's ships in the haven, haughty creatures who had no doubt been dissipating ashore when they should have been out at sea engaging the enemy to prevent a landing. Whatever the provocation, they were in no mood to be approached save with the utmost circumspection. The young nigger must have offended their delicate sensibilities. One of them struck him furiously with an iron-shod staff. Fatally wounded, the unfortunate youth staggered back to Drake's quarters, and after reporting the outrage, with the blood-stained flag of truce in his arms, fell dead at the admiral's feet.

The Spaniards, to their own misfortune, had brought about a scene which the men of Elizabethan England could only take in one way. It was dramatic, it was poignant, and it was in accordance exactly with the Spanish character as they were in the habit of describing it among themselves. It was senseless cruelty and contrary to the Spaniard's own rules of war. To Drake the spectacle of his own messenger lying dead in front of him must have acted like a magic potion. It was the kind of thing he was marvelously competent to handle. Biggs says he "was greatly passioned." [2] The provost marshal, in charge of the prisoners, was ordered to select a couple of friars, take them to the scene of the attack on the negro boy, and hang them

[1] We know that Drake's alliances with the Cimarrones, or escaped negroes of the interior, infuriated and terrified the Spaniards.

[2] The author of the *Primrose* log says the boy had been sent to meet an officer with a flag of truce, which would only make the matter worse in Drake's view.

there and then. At the same time another prisoner was sent with a message informing the Spanish governor why this execution had taken place, with the further information that unless the officer who had killed the negro was delivered up, two prisoners a day would be strung up on the same gibbet.

This savage but salutary procedure was immediately effective. The captain of the King's ship arrived with the guilty officer. But Drake declined, in his rage, to give the Spaniards even this satisfaction. With sardonic ingenuity he ordered them to hang him themselves.

It is the duty of the moralists rather than the biographer to assess the value of such acts to humanity. It would be dangerous to assume that Frobisher, had he been in Drake's position, would have acted differently, or more mildly. He would perhaps have led the whole army forward and driven the Spaniards to a pitched battle. He was no amateur, after two campaigns in Ireland, in the business of fighting. But Drake had the dramatic touch. Shakespeare at this very moment, while Drake sat in his quarters in the shadow of the cathedral at San Domingo, was listening to sailors talk in London taverns of those "still vext Bermoothes." He would have relished the sight of those tall strong fellows, lounging in the gallery of the governor's palace, making rude jests with the Spanish commissioners come to treat for the sparing of their town. Their sense of humour was elementary, perhaps, and they lacked the modern delicacy of consideration for an enemy's feelings. The dungeons of Seville and Cadiz were not favourable to the development of such delicacy. On the wall of the great gallery in St. Domingo was painted a vast escutcheon of His Catholic Majesty. It was depicted upon a globe "containing in it the whole circuit of the sea and the earth, whereon

is a horse standing on his hinder part within the globe and the other forepart without the globe, lifted up as it were to leap, with a scroll painted in his mouth with these words in Latin, *Non sufficit orbis,* which is as much as to say, *The world sufficeth not.*

This was too much for the men who were gouging the very heart and liver out of the Spanish King's dominions overseas. We can imagine Captain Frobisher, come ashore to see the Admiral, having the Latin legend and the device explained to him as he passed through. It would give him a moment's grim amusement, no doubt; but Frobisher never seems to have discovered that fierce personal dislike of the Spaniard which informed Drake's very soul. The closer he approached to the naval officer on active service, preoccupied with service problems, visualising the enemy as part of an external antagonism to the power and prosperity of his own Queen and country, the happier Frobisher seemed to have become. To Drake, the close association with the Council, the coöperating with superior officers and the necessity for modifying his own actions to harmonise with other commanders, was distasteful. Frobisher came into his own in a general action. And if he could not take a Spaniard he would take a Dutchman and let the law lords of the admiralty argue about the legalities involved. In nine cases out of ten the Dutchman was making money out of the Spanish interests. Frobisher was an earnest architect of his own fortunes. He graduated out of the petty adventurer class into the circle of Elizabethan heroes and he was singularly free from the smaller defects of his contemporaries. Those accusations of which we read are the common lot of commanders in all ages.

CHAPTER XIII

CARTAGENA DE INDIAS

IN THE first year of the sixteenth century the Spanish adventurer, Rodrigo Calvan de Bastidas, explored the country west of Santa Marta and around the Magdalena Delta. The Calomar Indians, however, remained masters of the situation until Don Pedro de Heredia, Lieutenant-Governor of Santa Marta, received a commission from the King of Spain in 1532 to found a settlement. At the beginning of the following year, having defeated the Indians on the site of the present town of Calomar, they moved down to the coast again and founded the city of Cartagena de Indias on a point of land between a shore protected by perilous reefs and a wide lagoon admitting to an inner bay.

This brief note concerning the city toward which Drake and Frobisher were sailing in 1586, is designed to correct the common illusion that the sixteenth-century antagonists of Spain were in the habit of attacking the formidably strong fortress-city which may be seen to-day. Cartagena de Indias was only fifty years old when the English fleet, after sacking and burning San Domingo, sailed so close to the rocky coast that they were within range of the culverins mounted, as Biggs says, "not upon walls, but upon certain platforms." In fact, it is necessary to dismiss from mind the Cartagena which Admiral Vernon bombarded a century and a

half later. Drake attacked a city strong indeed by natural position, and important as the *entrepôt* of the Magdalena and Cauca valleys. But it was not the impregnable fortress with mighty walls whose ruins we see to-day. Thirty-five years earlier it had been entirely destroyed by fire because the houses were built of bamboo and mud, and thatched, like the modern native huts, with palmetto.

Many of the Spanish gentlemen-adventurers who had accompanied Quesada to the high plateau of Cundinamarca when he conquered the Chibcha Indians and founded the capital of Santa Fé de Bogotá, had settled in the rich valleys of the central and western ranges of the Cordillera. Here they established themselves and their families on the banks of rivers whose beds were incredibly rich in gold. Higher up in the rocky fastnesses of the Andes were veins of gold in the quartz. North of Bogotá were the richest emerald mines in the world, and the greatest salt mine in South America. And Cartagena shared with Santa Marta the wealth which was pouring down the Magdalena from the authentic Eldorado of men's dreams. Sir Francis, who had looted the world's treasure house in Peru, had long had his eye on Cartagena de Indias. It was the rendezvous for all the shipping of the Spanish Main. Rio Hasha had an open roadstead; Santa Marta was a haven, indeed, but subject to sudden squalls. The great lagoon of Cartagena was forever sheltered.

Cartegena received warning of the impending misfortune. Some small fast inter-island vessels, feeders for the homeward-bound galleons, had sighted the attack on San Domingo and had made off in the night for the Spanish Main. The governor of Cartagena lost no time. He sent up-country to Mompos and Tolu. In addition to about seven hundred Europeans, there were five hundred Indians with bows and arrows. This

seems to indicate that the Spanish policy in New Granada had become conciliatory and humane since Quesada first forced the passage of the Magdalena. The streets were barricaded on the landward side and the inner haven closed by a heavy chain between the two forts, La Machina and La Caleta. When the English fleet sailed past the city, making for the far entrance of the lagoon, all possible preparations had been completed.

In its general natural configuration the harbour of Cartagena de Indias is one of the most convenient and easily defended in the world. The large low island of Tierra Bomba incloses an extensive semicircular area of water. A sandy spit, scarcely more than a few yards wide in places, reaches out from the city walls toward Tierra Bomba and forms the northern side of the Boca Grande. At the southern end of the island is Boca Chica, or Little Mouth, which is now the only entrance accessible for ships. Boca Grande, after repeated assaults and captures of the city, was closed, and in the eighteenth century the Spanish engineer Don Antonio de Arévalo built a low breakwater across this entrance.

Drake, greatly daring, and revealing his truly amazing knowledge of the coast, now led the fleet past the Boca Grande and, sailing due west, skirted the Tierra Bomba and piloted the ships through the narrow and perilous Boca Chica. It is impossible to see from the city of Cartagena a ship passing through Boca Chica into the harbour, for the low hills and vegetation of Tierra Bomba Island intervene. The channel is less than a quarter of a mile wide in places and the entrance must have been made with pinnaces going ahead sounding. When at length the fleet arrived before the barricaded entrance of the inner harbour the Spaniards were unable to conjecture what Drake's plans might be.

The assumption was that he was about to force the entrance.

It is necessary to note the peculiar shape of the harbour which made it a naturally strong position. The city lay behind the long narrow spit, while the forts of La Machina and La Caleta, now called Castilla Grande and Manzanillo, were on the right, with the castle of San Lazaro and the long high promontory of La Popa visible beyond. Above the roofs of the city could be discerned the church of Santo Domingo.

By sunset all was ready for a landing. There was no moon, and a night attack, audacious and desperate, was decided upon. Carleil was to land with his pikemen on the spit and advance toward the city, while the fleet, under Frobisher, was to stage an attack upon the forts and boom as soon as contact had been made with the defenders on shore.

The landing was effected as soon as it was dark, the sound of the surf drowning any sounds they might have made, and the general, ordering a forward movement at midnight, directed his men to keep close to the sea. It seems that their first attempt had been a failure. The volunteer guide lost the way among the scrub and sand dunes and probably led them off in the direction of the harbour entrance. They had about two and a half miles to go.

Suddenly they were aware of a squadron of cavalry ahead, and the arquebusiers let fly a volley of shot. The bushes came down to the very sea at this point. To try to ride down a company of pikemen in the dark in such circumstances was out of the question. The horsemen retreated and Carleil heard at once the answering signal. Frobisher, with boats and pinnaces, was bombarding the harbour forts.

As they approached the city the neck of land became only a mere fifty paces wide and they encountered a

THE HARBOUR OF CARTAGENA
(As it was at the time of the assault by Drake and Frobisher)

stone wall with a ditch. The gate of it was barricaded with wine-casks filled with earth piled one on the other and even carried down into the sea. Here were six guns, five and nine pounders, trained upon the advancing columns. Moreover, the Spaniards had run two large galleys, which were in the harbour, right up to this wall, contriving it as it were somewhat at an angle, and mounted upon them were eleven guns enfilading the approach. Three or four hundred of small arms were also stationed on the decks of these vessels, and on the wall three hundred more with pikes.

Such a defense might easily have daunted the most reckless of men had they seen it clearly in broad daylight. But Carleil was a commander cool and very resourceful. He had no doubt discussed the details of this march with Drake as they sailed toward the Boca Grande. Keeping his men close to the low outer edge of the land, he let the Spaniards pour their shot, for the most part overhead, without replying. As they reached the barricaded entrance the pikemen began to run, and as the musketeers fired almost point-blank at the defenders, the pikemen rushed the wine-casks, turned them over, and swarmed through. "Down went the butts of earth and pell-mell came our swords and pikes together, after our first shot had given their volleys, even at the enemy's nose." So writes Biggs with a vividness that has not evaporated after three hundred years. "Our pikes," he adds with unconscious humour, "were somewhat longer than theirs, and our bodies better armed." The fight must have been both hot and bloody, for Carleil slew "with his own hands the ensign-bearer of the Spaniards, who fought very manfully to his life's end."

The same tactics were pursued as at San Domingo. The English pounded right into the town after the retreating garrison and made straight for the plaza.

It was a peculiarity of Spanish towns which made them extremely easy to capture and hold, once the walls were carried. The streets were barricaded skillfully, but with the houses not of stone but of bamboo and mud, they were not hard to turn.

Here Lieutenant Cripps, who carried on with the chronicle after Biggs had died, mentions the Indian bowmen. Their arrows, he notes, were "most villainously empoisoned, so as if they did but break the skin, the party so touched died without great marvel." This vivid description of the action of the native poison indicates the use of what is to-day called *curare*. Efforts to discover the actual ingredients of the stuff have not been successful, but long sojourn among the Indians of the Amazon and Orinoco headwaters has proved that among other substances a form of strychnine is included. When the poison enters the circulation it paralyses the vaso-motor system of nerves, bringing on in a short time intense weariness and soon after the heart ceases to function.

So far as we are able to discover, Frobisher's attack upon the port entrance was merely active enough to engage a fair portion of the defenders and distract the counsels of the commander, Don Pedro Vique Manrique. That they anticipated a determined onset was evidenced by the city being empty save of combatants. And once the market place was gained, these too abandoned the city and made off toward Turbaco, where the governor and archbishop, with the priests, nuns, friars, and women, were already retired. The English found themselves in possession of a deserted city.

Many details are overlooked in Bigg's narrative. As he himself says—and he can have had no conception of the importance of his words—"I overpass many particular matters." Indeed, the whole account suffers because Biggs and Cripps, who completed it after the

death of Biggs, were soldiers. To them a ship was merely a conveyance for soldiers. It is a lucky circumstance that he remembered to mention how in the attack on the harbour Frobisher "had the rudder of his skiff stricken through the sakershot [five pounder] and little or no harm received elsewhere." As a matter of fact the log of Frobisher's ship *Primrose* mentions somewhat more than this. "Our ships could not come near the town for lack of water to batter it, and where our pinnaces should go in was but the length of two ships, and it was chained over from the castle with 16 pieces of ordnance in this narrow gutter; yet we did attempt it, though we had the rudder of our pinnace shot away and men's hats from their heads and the top of our mainmast beaten in pieces, the oars stricken out of our men's hands as they rowed and our captain like to have been killed."

After such pithy and vivid phrases Biggs and his successor seem inadequate. The lieutenant-general was evidently the most important person of the expedition, in the opinion of Biggs and his collaborator. Praising Drake for his careful disposition, the latter says "and no less happy do we account him for being associated with Master Carleil, his Lieutenant-General." Doubtless Master Carleil was the patron of Master Biggs, and had appointed him to his lowly post of captain of musketeers. And we may conclude easily enough that from that position in life the command of a fleet of between twenty and thirty ships, the organisation requisite for going in and out of harbour, anchoring, disembarking and embarking, making sail and keeping company, communications and provisions of crews, would pass unnoticed as part of the orderly beneficence of nature and in no way extraordinary in comparison with the business of a military man.

But indeed Biggs and Company are unsatisfactory in

dealing with the relations between Drake and Don Pedro Vique. "Divers courtesies passed between us and the Spaniards, as feasting and using them with all kindness and favour." The authorities having returned to the city and many of the population, too, in response to a threat from Drake to burn it otherwise, it is difficult to reconcile the above statement with the fact that Drake was coolly proposing to loot the last possible ducat from the place. "This town we touched in the out parts and consumed much with fire, as we had done San Domingo, upon discontentments and for want of agreeing with us in their first treaties touching their ransom; which at the last was concluded between us should be one hundred and ten thousand ducats for that which was yet standing the ducat valued at five shillings and sixpence sterling." It would have been instructive if Biggs, or his successor, had been more explicit concerning the kindness and courtesies of the English buccaneer. Drake had long since abandoned any pretense that he was making legal war upon Spain. It may be doubted whether he had any clear conception of international usage at any time. It may be doubted further, whether, had a frigate arrived from England with explicit orders from the Queen to abandon his cruise of conquest and rapine, and to return home, he would have complied. The line between Drake and Frobisher, with twenty-five privateers, and some truculent and bankrupt west country sea-captain ravaging the coasters between Bilboa and Corunnia, is not always easy to make out clearly.[1] On neither side was there pretense at Cartagena. Don Pedro had had notice of the English fleet and all the treasure in the city had been removed and hidden up-country. Drake proposed to get all he could of it; but his men were still sick of the plague, and the mosquitoes which rose in

[1] One seems to have been "reprisals"; the other "an unfriendly act."

clouds from the low swampy ground about Cartagena were infecting many more with fever. His military officers, under Carleil, were getting out of hand. There were evidently a few sea lawyers in the wardrooms of the fleet. It was plain enough to the commander that he would do well to get to sea again.

Hakluyt incorporates in the Biggs narrative the "Resolution of the Land-Captains, what course they think most expedient." The inference, of course, is that Drake begged for their opinion, and while the Queen may have stipulated for some such supervisory check on her admiral, it may be assumed that considerable verbal discussion had preceded the composition of this wordy and evasive document.

> A Resolution of the Land-Captains, what course they think most expedient to be taken. Given at Carthagena, the 27, of February, 1585.
>
> WHEREAS it hath pleased the General to demand the opinions of his captains what course they think most expedient to be now undertaken, the land-captains being assembled by themselves together, and having advised hereupon, do in three points deliver the same.
>
> THE FIRST, touching the keeping of the town against the force of the enemy, either that which is present, or that which may come out of Spain, is answered thus:—
>
> "We hold opinion, that with this troop of men which we have presently with us in land service, being victualled and munitioned, we may well keep the town, albeit that of men able to answer present service we have not above 700. The residue, being some 150 men, by reason of their hurts and sickness, are altogether unable to stand us in any stead; wherefore hereupon the sea-captains are

likewise to give their resolution, how they will undertake the safety and service of the ships upon the arrival of any Spanish fleet."

THE SECOND point we make to be this, whether it be meet to go presently homeward, or else to continue further trial of our fortune in undertaking such like enterprises as we have done already, and thereby to seek after that bountiful mass of treasure for recompense of our travails, which was generally expected at our coming forth of *England;* wherein we answer:

"That it is well known how both we and the soldiers are entered into this action as voluntary men, without any impress or gage from her Majesty or anybody else. And forasmuch as we have hitherto discharged the parts of honest men, so that now by the great blessing and favour of our good God there have been taken three such notable towns, wherein by the estimation of all men would have been found some very great treasures, knowing that Santiago was the chief city of all the islands and traffics thereabouts, *St. Domingo,* the chief city of Hispaniola, and the head government not only of that island, but also of *Cuba,* and of all the islands about it, as also of such inhabitations of the firm land, as were next unto it, and a palace that is both magnificently built and entertaineth great trades of merchandise; and now lastly the city of *Carthagena,* which cannot be denied to be one of the chief places of most especial importance to the Spaniard of all the cities which be on this side of the *West India;* we do therefore consider, that since all these cities, with their goods and prisoners taken in them, and the ransoms of the said cities, being all put together, are found far short to satisfy that expecta-

tion which by the generality of the enterprisers was first conceived; and being further advised of the slenderness of our strength, whereunto we be now reduced, as well in respect of the small number of able bodies as also not a little in regard to the slack disposition of the greater part of those which remain, very many of the better minds and men being either consumed by death or weakened by sickness and hurts; and lastly, since that as yet there is not laid down to our knowledge any such enterprise as may seem convenient to be undertaken with such few as we are presently able to make, and withal of such certain likelihood, as with God's good success which it may please him to bestow upon us, the same may promise to yield us any sufficient contentment; we do therefore conclude hereupon, that it is better to hold sure as we may the honour already gotten, and with the same to return towards our gracious sovereign and country, from whence, if it shall please her Majesty to set us forth again with her orderly means and entertainment, we are most ready and willing to go through with anything that the uttermost of our strength and endeavour shall be able to reach unto. But therewithal we do advise and protest that it is far from our thoughts, either to refuse, or so much as to seem to be weary of anything, which for the present shall be further required or directed to be done by us from our General."

THE THIRD and last point is concerning the ransom of this city of *Carthagena,* for the which, before it was touched with any fire, there was made an offer of some £27,000 or £28,000 sterling:—

"Thus much we utter herein as our opinions, agreeing, so it be done in good sort, to accept this

offer aforesaid, rather than to break off by standing still upon our demands of £100,000; which seems a matter impossible to be performed for the present by them. And to say the truth, we may now with much honour and reputation better be satisfied with that sum offered by them at the first, if they will now be contented to give it, than we might at that time with a great deal more; inasmuch as we have taken our full pleasure, both in the uttermost sacking and spoiling of all their household goods and merchandise, as also in that we have consumed and ruined a great part of their town with fire. And thus much further is considered herein by us; that as there be in the voyage a great many poor men, who have willingly adventured their lives and travails, and divers amongst them having spent their apparel and such other little provisions as their small means might have given them leave to compare, which being done upon such good and allowable intention as this action hath always carried with it (meaning, against the Spaniard, our greatest and most dangerous enemy), so surely we cannot but have an inward regard, so far as may lie in us, to help them in all good sort towards the satisfaction of this their expectation; and by procuring them some little benefit to encourage them, and to nourish this ready and willing disposition of theirs, both in them and in others by their example, against any other time of like occasion. But because it may be supposed that herein we forget not the private benefit of ourselves, and are thereby the rather moved to include ourselves to this composition, we do therefore think good for the clearing ourselves of all such suspicion, to declare hereby, that what part or portion soever it be of

this ransom of composition for *Carthagena* which should come unto us, we do freely give and bestow the same wholly upon the poor men who have remained with us in the voyage (meaning as well the sailor as the soldier), wishing with all our hearts it were such or so much as might see a sufficient reward for their painful endeavour. And for the firm confirmation thereof, we have thought meet to subsign these presents with our own hands in the place and time aforesaid."

CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER CARLILE, Lieutenant-General; CAPTAIN CORING, CAPTAIN SAMPSON, CAPTAIN POWELL, &C.

Reduced to a few words and stripped of a certain sanctimoniousness of phrase, the Resolution of the land-captains indicates that they wanted to go home. The elaborate verbosity of their memorial must have made Drake pull his beard and gnaw his mustache as he waded through it. The man who had sailed round the world in a hundred-and-twenty-ton ship, looting the whole west coast of a treasure worth millions, must have marveled at the care these gentlemen had of their lives. Neither Pizarro, Cortez, nor Quesada would have welcomed men of this kidney. We can figure the Admiral in his cabin, sending for his Vice-Admiral to come over and take a dram of aquavitæ while the water-casks were filling on Tierra Bomba, and reading it out to him. To get the full effect of such a scene it is necessary to recall that other picture of Drake on board the *Golden Hind,* at San Julian in the depth of winter, a few days after the execution of Thomas Doughty, for inciting to mutiny. It will be remembered how he told Parson Fletcher that he would preach that day himself, how he began to read from a paper, precise at first and later in vigorous declamatory style, straight

from the shoulder. And then it seems as though he rose from his seat in his open tent and, banging the table sharply, let fly at the assembled crews.

> ". . . By the life of God it doth take my wits from me to think of it! Here is such controversy between the sailors and the gentlemen, and such stomaching between the gentlemen and the sailors that it doth even make me mad to hear it. But, my masters, I must have it left! . . . I would like to know him that would refuse to set his hand to a rope! . . . Also if there be any here willing to return home, let me understand of them, and here is the *Marigold,* a ship I can very well spare. . . . I will furnish her to such as will return . . . but let them take heed that they go homeward, for if I find them in my way I will surely sink them."

Reading the Resolution, we may well ask ourselves, what had become of the old Drake? To him this sacking of Cartagena was but the preliminary skirmish of the great adventure, which was the looting of Porto Bello, and a clutch at the very windpipe of Spanish power in the West by a march from the Chagres to the City of Panama. The grandeur of such a scheme was obviously invisible to the signatories of that puling petition. Had it been followed up, the Catholic colossus would have toppled in a decade. With Panama destroyed and Porto Bello in English hands, the treasure house of the world was Elizabeth's. She could have treated with Philip and dictated the policy of northern Europe.

Mr. Benson has suggested, in his *Drake* of this series, that Sir Francis, after carefully considering the whole situation, agreed with his land-captains that no

other course than the one adopted lay open to them; that no treasure would now come across the Isthmus so long as he was known to be in those regions; and that there was danger of a Spanish fleet being sent after him if he waited for reinforcements from England. But these arguments were all equally valid before Drake attacked Cartagena. There is no reason, judging from the generalship of Drake and the extraordinary enthusiasm of the troops, for supposing that they had any idea of abandoning the enterprise previous to the attack. The capture involved them in no very heavy losses. It is difficult to conceive them having any greater success than they had already attained, with the one exception of the health of the company. That indeed was alarming in the speed with which it was reducing their effectives. It is also quite possible that the whole fleet, in addition to those patently sick, were suffering from the malarial fevers of the coast. One must remember, when discussing any operations in the Central American countries, the terrible effect of the climate of the hot lands on all white men not inured to it. And even if we assume that Drake never made a mistake, even if we agree that his decision was inevitable and wise, we are constrained to admit that it was not in character for him to fall in with that "Resolution of the Land-Captains."

Whatever the reason, the expedition, having gouged about twenty-eight thousand pounds out of Cartagena, and after a few minor mishaps which Biggs expands into several pages without contributing much to our knowledge of the adventure, sailed north for Cuba. On the 27th of April Cape San Antonio was sighted. Although only eight days from Cartagena, it appears the ships were in need of fresh water again. But, the wind being strongly from the northeast, they were unable to make Matanzas, east of Havana, where was an

accessible landing. Fourteen days they cruised in the Yucatan Channel before they won back to Cape San Antonio and made shift with some pools of rain water they found near by.

Drake's purpose in faring northward was to seek out a colony sent out a year previously by Raleigh in pursuance of his scheme to establish an English nation in America. There was also known to be a Spanish settlement on the Florida coast, and on May 28th "early in the morning, we descried on shore a place built like a beacon . . .a scaffold upon four long masts raised on end, for men to discover to the seaward, being in the latitude of thirty degrees." This was St. Augustine, and measures were immediately taken to capture the fort at the mouth of the river.

Master Cripps, who carried on the narrative of Walter Biggs when that worthy marine was dead, was evidently of a democratic cast of mind, for he reports with evident pleasure the decision made "in a full assembly of captains." He alludes to the fact that the Virginian governor, Ralph Lane, was offered by Drake "with the consent of his captains" a ship and provisions. To compare the report of this voyage with Drake's previous expedition round the world is somewhat startling. After Cartagena, Drake seems to have been ill either in body or in mind. He fades out in a fog of confusing minor details which afford us, at this distance, no comprehensible picture of what they were doing. There is an unconsciously ironical comment in the fussy account of the death of Captain Powell, "sergeant major" of the force. In the pursuit of the enemy into St. Augustine this officer found a horse with saddle and bridle, and was at once away after the Spaniards. Being far ahead of the other English on foot, he was shot from behind a bush and stabbed to death. His death, we are told, "was much lamented, being an

honest, wise gentleman and a soldier of good experience, and of as great courage as any man might be."

There is also a pretty story of a French captive rowing down the river at night, playing a Protestant tune on his fife to warn the English he was a friend come to tell them the Spaniards were all gone from the fort. This Nicholas Borgoignon, a survivor of the French colony at St. Augustine destroyed by the Spaniards, was full of information. He not only was able to conduct Carleil and his men into the fort, but he had wondrous tales of mountains full of rubies, diamonds, and gold, far away in the interior. So brightly did these mountains gleam in the sun with the richness of their treasures that it was necessary to approach them by night. A Spaniard who was taken home by Drake confirmed this. Señor Morales had seen these mountains of Apalachi. He had seen a monster diamond brought out of its fabulous recesses.

Such tales are a commonplace of the time. These adventurers, burning with the desire of wealth, and probably wanted at home by the law, omitted to carry with them a little elementary mineralogy. Diamond mines, the stones already cut and polished, on the tops of mountains, close by caves full of flashing rubies, cliffs gleaming with yellow metal, presented no difficulty to these truculent pioneers of the sixteenth century who had never seen a gold mine or an emerald mine in their lives.

But the tales of Morales and Borgoignon bore witness to an authentic movement in Spanish America toward establishing colonies as bases for the exploration and conquest of North America. Drake's excursion along the coast of what is now Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas, to Roanoke, resulted in two memorable achievements. He destroyed the unfinished outpost of St. Augustine and he took home with him the dis-

couraged remnant of Raleigh's colony of "Virginia." A by-product of this latter act was the introduction of tobacco in England.

Altogether, our informants concerning this important voyage of Drake and Frobisher, to reveal the flimsy character of Philip's hold on America, are inadequate. There are so many gaps in the story filled in with useless minutiæ. The changes in policy and action are not explained, because the writers did not know. Important details are telescoped from either indolence or ignorance. The documents were completed in haste, as though the authors were glad to have done with them. It is most unfortunate that Drake, who was not enchanted with the figure he made in Hakluyt's first edition, did not make a personal record of this important voyage. The fact that an expedition of twenty-three hundred men lost seven hundred and fifty by wounds and sickness is not sufficient explanation of the abandonment of Drake's original plans. And it is to be conjectured that if Drake had written this account we should have heard less concerning "the consent of the captains" and their resolutions, less about the momentous decision of Captain Winter to fight on land rather than on sea, and more concerning the true policy of the voyage and the work of the Vice-Admiral.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CHANNEL FLEET

HE year 1587 was one of the most critical of the century both for England and for Europe. The events of that year made the Armada possible and inevitable. Elizabeth definitely, behind her transcendent diplomacy (or duplicity), decided that Spain in the Low Countries was destined to be ever a bad friend and a worse neighbour. Mary Stuart and the Catholic faction in England lost their heads at the same moment at Fotheringay Castle. Drake, by luck or judgment eluding both the Queen's eccentric management of a navy and "the consent of the captains assembled," made a lightning dash into the enemy's naval base and did amazing execution among the galliots and transports. The naval blockade was effectively applied to all ships sailing from the Baltic to Spanish ports. The Sultan of Turkey was persuaded into an offensive alliance against Spain. Last, but by no means least, in the light of the following years, all fantastic schemes for perpetuating the Tudor dynasty by a marriage with a foreign prince faded from public and political minds. Elizabeth had reigned alone for thirty years. The Protestant James of Scotland was the son of Mary Stuart, and the two nations, so different in temperament, so marvelously complementary in their characteristics, were imperceptibly but no less definitely moving toward a union.

That these changes were apparent to the truculent and individualistic actors in the mighty drama may well be doubted. Drake and Frobisher, home from their swing round the Caribbean, their purses well stuffed with Spanish gold, their personal prestige as high among all ranks as any mortal could desire, were too close to the times to appreciate the scheme of things entire. They were concerned with their own evolving profession. Drake was obsessed with the conception of naval strategy which was proved, in the last three hundred and fifty years, to be England's sure shield—that an enemy fleet should always be attacked and destroyed in enemy waters, if possible in enemy harbours. And Frobisher, as has been already stated, saw with admirable clearness the indispensable nature of the blockade. He saw that if the enemy were permitted to import the materials of war it was futile to expect the conclusion of any war. He saw that if neutrals were permitted to make money by selling material to the enemy behind a hypocritical assumption of "the freedom of the seas," a blockade became a delusion and a sham. And the year 1587 saw these two erstwhile pirates and buccaneers, with that tough old slaver Sir John Hawkins, occupying their minds with the fundamentals of naval war as applied to an island people.

It is reasonable to surmise why Frobisher was not appointed to go with Drake on the Cadiz expedition. The reputation for being a difficult associate might carry some weight, but all these aggressive and egotistical commanders were difficult associates. Moreover, we have a letter from some one in Spain who wrote that Frobisher might go with Drake "as he could take orders." On the other hand, Frobisher might have felt some reluctance to sail with Drake again after the West Indian cruise. Drake was somewhat of a marti-

net, and Frobisher was very much of a martinet. And beyond all these conjectures it is possible that Master William Borough, Frobisher's "manne Burrows," who bought his captain a bottle of brandy for ten shillings long ago in 1575, and who was now with Hawkins at the Admiralty, may have been appointed for the purpose of acting as a check upon Drake. Borough was one of the old school. He was senior to Drake and regarded himself, in the modern naval phrase, as "with and after" that officer. His protest to Drake against holding the St. Vincent station in 1587 and Drake's courteous description of him as "very discreet, honest, and most efficient," illustrate the rudimentary nature of the Elizabethan naval discipline.

Frobisher, our anonymous correspondent in Spain remarked, had the name for being able to take orders. He was, in fact, taking orders at this time. He was in charge of one of the first organized "Dover Patrols." His commission was to hold the Narrow Seas. He carried to and from the Low Countries the messengers, the stores, and the troops which the presence of the Earl of Leicester in those parts rendered necessary. And while the glory and wealth to be gotten from a cruise with Drake was a strong incentive, it might well be that Frobisher preferred to command off Dover. There were prizes to be taken there, too.

It is a strange accident of history that we have no example of Frobisher's own writing between the simple and beautifully concise letter left for his five lost men among the Eskimos and the following dubious composition. We know Frobisher wrote the earlier letter because Best, who was quite an author, says in so many words, it was "by himself hastily written." There is nothing essentially depraved about this letter to Leicester, but the difference in literary style may be attributed to the self-consciousness many excellent men,

afloat and ashore, suffer when addressing the great. The spelling is entirely Frobisher's own invention, and as the years passed he attained, as we shall see, new heights of unexpected ingenuity.

The letter itself is important to us for the stress it lays upon the action of Holland during the war. A glance at a map of Europe in the sixteenth century shows how the States General, a long narrow territory, lay between the United Netherlands, or Holland, and the Spanish dominions. The ports of the former were in the habit of issuing, on demand, passes to go through the Narrow Seas. Frobisher is suggesting to Leicester that he authorize some indorsement of these papers so that the navy may know whom to pass and whom to arrest.

More important still is the gentle hint to Leicester that the navy knows what is going on at Antwerp, the preparation of an army of invasion to land in England. The "Lorde Govenare of fflushine" (Flushing, one of the towns held by Elizabeth), Sir William Russell, knows nothing of this, Frobisher reports. It might easily be true. Russell was one of the gallant band of irregular cavalry at Sutphen who charged down upon the Spanish ambuscade, armed with battle axes and swords, and did fearful execution without achieving any military success whatever. Froude says of Russell that in this fight "he fought so desperately he was taken for the devil." At Flushing he was between the fury of the Dutch and the inexplicable tantrums of Elizabeth, and he may well have lacked time or disposition to anticipate the scheme of Philip and Parma to invade England.

It will be necessary occasionally to set down some of Martin's letters. The following communication to Leicester is more or less intelligible without a glossary:

My humble dewttye my honorable good Lord att my last retorne in to Englande I aquanted my Lord Admerall with the report of the preparassione att Andwarpe and that I thought Your Excelince woulde resave it thynkefullye if the sheps thatt I hadd in the Narrow Saes myghte come to yo' Excelince untill there pretince were understande, and presintelye my Lorde seinte me to yo' Excelince dericksione for that sarves. I understande by me Lord Govenare of fflushing he heres no farther of it. My Lorde Admirall wryttes to me thatt her Majty dothe much excepte some things done ffor slewes [Sluys] as Sr. Thomas Sherlay is able to advartes yor Excelince of here owne mouthe. I understande yor Excelince wolde have a louinge Botte [long boat]; the louinge botte my Lord Admerall hade here were a sarvesable a botte for yor excelince as a galleye and better for this countrye yf it plese yor excellince to wrytte to mye Lord for her she shall be her withe as much spyde [speed] as may be. I mette with a nomber of holkes and flebotte and they past all in your Excelince name under the towne selles [seals] of Holland. I understand thaye grant them to the enemy withe blanke so we canoott [cannot] knowe the on [one] ffrome the other. Maye it plese yor Excelince that by some synemente [signature] or by some selle [seal] of yor owne with theres [theirs] wee maye knowe whome to staye and whoo to lett pass. I was comynge to have done my dewttye to yor Excelince butt the wynde was dowbtefull [doubtful] and our vittelles were spente for since my comynge fourthe I hayd butt 3 dayes libertye to louke after the dunkyrkes [Dunkirk] with geving attendance of the tresure. I humble crave yor excelince to pardon me for

thatt mye charge is the cause I for bere [forbear] to come for whele [while] God givethe me lyfe youe shall finde me dewttefull and ffathefull to youe and youres. Thus I rest withe my humble prare to the Almeighte ffor the prosperus estatte of yor excelince to the glorye of God and the greatt honore of our Countrye. Thes 17 of September 1587.

Yor Excelince most Bounde
MARTIN FROBISHER.

The treasure to which Frobisher alludes in his letter is probably the money sent to Leicester to pay the army. Fugger's correspondent at Cologne writes, exactly a month earlier, the following interesting paragraph of news:

> Letters from the 10th inst. from Middleburg report that the Earl of Leicester has arrived there from England. With him in twelve vessels have come the Admiral of England, a Field Marshal, and also a number of courtiers. Thirty-two companies of soldiers may be expected any day. The Earl of Leicester is said to have brought £30,000 in cash.

The writer of this gossip was well aware of the operations of Sir Horatio Pallavicini, a prominent financier of the day who loaned money to Elizabeth, to Henry IV of France, and to the States General. Any movement of treasure would be known to Fugger's man long before it was actually placed on board Frobisher's ships for transport to Flushing.

The diversity of Frobisher's duties shows clearly that in spite of his lack of scholarly attainments he was exactly the sort of man the Queen's navy required. Sir

Walter Raleigh was supreme in his own realm of grandiose designs for an immense colonial empire between New Spain and Newfoundland. Drake could quote both Scripture and the Greek mythology to prove his point. He had, moreover, a vigorous turn of expression all his own. Even Hawkins, whose head swam as he gazed upon the Admiralty victualing figures or tried to make head and tail of the wage-bills Drake and Frobisher sent him, could write a virile and fascinating account of his voyage in 1567 when the Spaniards destroyed his fleet in San Juan de Ulua and Drake, a stripling of twenty-two, deserted him in the *Judith*. Other participants in the sea affair were fluent letter-writers, and the Great Armada of 1588 called forth all their powers.

But Frobisher was almost as inarticulate as Lord Anson a hundred years later. He seems to have been one of those seamen who never write home, a seaman whose ship is very much his house and whose profession is his recreation and his religion. We know he must have mingled with his kinsmen in London, for he had a nephew, young Martin Frobisher, with him at sea, besides one of the Yorkes, his mother's family. But we can conjecture from the examples we have of his handwriting that it was difficult for him to produce and even more toilsome for them to decipher.

Another significant feature of Frobisher's correspondence is worth noting. In all human probability he anticipated the modern phonetic craze and his letters may be offered to phonetic enthusiasts as examples of the futility of their obsession. A careful notation of Frobisher's use of vowels reveals him speaking as a Yorkshireman, a West Riding man. "Since my comynge fourthe I hayd butt 3 dayes liberty to louke after the dunkyrkes." "And so refarde [referred] me to yor Excelince derecksione for that sarves

[service]." In another letter he spells towards "touards", which is a good rendering of north-country speech. "France" he spells "Franes" instead of "Fraunce," which seems to be the customary Elizabethan pronunciation, to rhyme with "daunce." Later in the same letter, a long valuable disquisition addressed to Lord Burghley, he utters the pious wish: "bute I hope God wolle provente them," which can be pronounced very much in the Yorkshire manner.

We may conclude, without stretching probabilities too tautly, that Frobisher talked and acted during his lifetime like a man from his native Riding, who has had no education to smooth the burr from his speech or the ready irascible temper from his manners. When he had to write to a great man like Leicester, a glittering creature very much in the public eye, a man whose intimacy with his sovereign had been known to all men for thirty years, whose money and influence had helped more than one daring adventurer to equip a fleet for sea, Frobisher—like most rough independent persons—overdid the formalities of address. What the elegant and harassed Leicester made of that weird scrawl we do not know. He certainly did not act upon it. History has made a contradictory muddle of the earl. It would be foolish to believe him the utter imbecile Froude makes him out to be. The records of his contemporaries deprive him of the lofty eminence upon which Mr. Frederick Chamberlin would leave him. It is enough to say that the greatest political genius ever known on earth, coupled with the military abilities of Napoleon and Marlborough, would have failed to make a success of Leicester's adventure in Flanders while Elizabeth played the game according to her own rules. Leicester did as well as any other man might have done under the circumstances.

The hulks and fly-boats to which Frobisher alludes

as evading his blockade with passes issued in blank to unknown consigners, were the freight-ships of the day. A hulk to Frobisher was a vessel somewhere between a caravel and a cromster. She had a high poop and one or two small guns thereon. She was bluff in the bows like them, but her rig approximated more closely to the galleon. The lower deck may have had ports, but they were closed up, and the space was used for cargo. With comparatively small modifications she became a useful man-of-war. Fly-boats were more like the modern wherries which may be seen offshore on the east coast of England, quite probably hailing from the Low Countries to-day.

Frobisher wrote his letter from his ship in Calais Roads. Most of his extant correspondence came from a ship's cabin, and the uneasy motion of a small vessel at anchor may have had something to do with the crabbedness of his hand. It may also explain the absence of an amanuensis. Ships such as he required for that service had to be small and handy, of light draught to chase small craft trying to run out of Nieuport or Dunkirk. There would be no appropriation for scriveners in the Dover Patrol under Queen Elizabeth.

Frobisher's interest in the "preparassiones" at Antwerp directs our attention to the true nature of England's peril. Philip of Spain, who had hired an assassin to murder William of Orange, and whose ambassador had been caught in Walsyngham's net while plotting to murder Elizabeth, had reached a decision to invade the Island Kingdom. But the Armada, which looms so large in our imaginations, was but a secondary part of the great scheme to subjugate England. The main movement of a military character was to transport across the intervening Channel the army of Spanish veterans under Parma from Dunkirk to Dover and the Thames Estuary.

Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, one of the first soldiers of Europe, was under no illusions as to the magnitude of the task which Philip had set him. He had reduced town after town in Flanders, but the ready welcome he accorded any proposals for peace, any intervention on the part of Elizabeth, indicated the strenuous nature of his campaigns. It might be too much to expect of a sixteenth century noble to suggest to his royal master that the Spanish Netherlands were a doubtful possession, a source of eternal illimitable expense, and might be diplomatically abandoned to the inhabitants. Parma must have known this, however. So far from living on the country, one of the most carefully cultivated in the world, one of the fairest spots in Europe, Parma had to clamour unceasingly for more and yet more money to pay his men. The merchants of Brabant could send no goods in payment. Frobisher and his Patrol stopped everybody, with passes or without. It came to a point later on when Frobisher considered that even a French ship was legally to be arrested when he found a Spaniard on board her, even though that Spaniard had a passport.

Philip was being driven onward irresistibly toward invasion. His fanatical creed, his illusion that God had called him to bring back England into the Catholic fold, his enormous debts to the great banking houses, and the outrageous depredations of the English corsairs, were all operating to convince him that for Spain the future held only world power or downfall. And while Parma wore down by slow methodical attrition the Dutch and English hold on the coast towns, so that the way might be clear to embark his invading army, while he collected in the Scheldt an immense array of flat-bottomed boats which might make the fifty-mile journey in safety in fine weather, the yards of Lisbon and Cadiz boomed and thundered with the blows of

mallets and hammers, the forges roared day and night, the foundries threw a red glare on the sky, as the armada of all armadas came into being. Those mighty floating fortresses were designed to form a rampart of flame between the on-coming Spanish army passing into England and the English ships. They were designed with a trust in mere weight and mass which had evolved inevitably out of the Spanish intelligence, crossed as it was with the Moor. They were literally floating castles, and a Spanish castle was a vast structure, depending upon the thickness and height of the walls. Some of the planking of the great ships in this new Armada was five feet thick and balls from English demi-culverin eighteen pounders were found imbedded in the wood. But a new spirit had passed over the face of the waters since Lepanto, and if Santa Cruz had lived to command the Armada he would probably have seen it before he reached St. Catherine's Point. Medina-Sidonia took back to his estates in Andalusia a nightmare of horror which lasted until he died. The Channel, that fateful day in July, 1588, was no place for amateurs.

And if Drake, by his astonishing dash into Cadiz, frightened Spanish ladies even at Philip's court and made his men feel they could beat the Don anywhere and anyhow, Frobisher, in a less spectacular way, was rowelling the enemy's vitals. He was also training officers and men in one of the most difficult corners of the sea. Through the Straits of Dover the tide pours like a mill-race twice a day. The shoals, not only offshore but in the mid-channel, are second only to the Goodwins in terror for a mariner without chart or experience. The seas were heavy enough in a good wind to fling any ship of those days on her beam ends if she had clumsy men aboard. Frobisher's mild excuse to Leicester, that he had no time to pay his respects to

his excellency, will be understood by those familiar with the Narrow Seas.

Frobisher's squadron indeed was vital to the safety of the army in Flanders and the people at home. His policy of stopping ships coming through the Straits was supplemented by the authorities in London. Fugger's man in Cologne hears that "all vessels in London are being detailed, but for the most part let go again." At Middelburg, one of the principal ports of the States General, the convoy system was put into operation. Fleets of eight ships at a time were allowed to depart under escort. This would simplify matters for the watching ships in the Straits; but Frobisher was looking out for vessels from Holland and the Baltic, vessels loaded with hemp, tallow, pitch, and timber.

It is a strange picture we look upon in those early days of 1588. The yards in Antwerp were working Sundays and holidays to finish a fleet of ships. Santa Cruz was commandeering ships of all nations in Spanish harbours. Ibrahim Pasha, the enlightened vizier of Murad III, whose handsome tomb may be seen in Constantinople to-day, was reported by Fugger's correspondent to have the arsenal crowded with ships building and repairing. It was even rumoured that Ibrahim, in response to the presence of our old friend Don Antonio, Prior of Crato, the busy and indomitable exile of Portugal, and the pressure of the English ambassador, whose ducats were oiling the wheels of diplomacy, would take the squadrons out in person. Drake, in spite of Vice-Admiral Borough, who had run away home, in spite of Elizabeth's changes of mind and the clever dispositions of the international financiers in London and Antwerp, had arrived in Plymouth with the huge San Felipe, the loot of Cadiz and Lisbon, and over a million ducats in gold.

But oblivious of all this, Elizabeth continued to

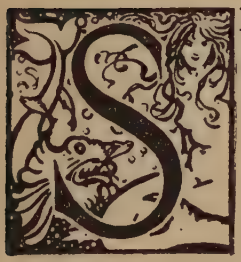
send commissioners to the Low Countries to discuss "peace." What she meant by peace it is confusing to conjecture. She had an army in Flanders fighting to hold the States General and coast towns from the Spanish; yet she was not at war with Spain. Her admirals held all Spanish ships, they slew Spanish soldiers and sailors, and they sank Spanish galleons in Spanish harbours: yet she was not at war with Spain. She desired "peace," however, for the Netherlands. Her profound understanding of the peculiar nature of England, whether entirely conscious or partly intuitive, bore upon its face the marks of a fatal insanity. What did she mean by "peace"? What were her real thoughts when she contemplated the master of the Escurial, the brother-in-law who believed in her excommunication and eternal damnation, who had complacently listened to assassins and renegades who sought to gain riches and absolution by regicide? Elizabeth was an extraordinary woman, and most of her contemporaries seemed to have lacked the equipment to understand her or to leave a comprehensible picture of her. Now and again the actual human being comes out in a phrase. But most of the time she plays a part. She assumes a virago-like anger, a grisly humour, a tigerish resentment, the speech of a fish-wife. She stamps her foot and screams at her envoys and ministers, and turns to stone at the supplications of officers whose men are in rags, are dying of hunger, cold, and dysentery. She is an original. She has great Harry's brain and pluck, his merciless pugnacity, in a body which has inherited his ultimate rottenness. There are many things she knows but of which she does not speak. She was the bridge between the late mediæval and our times. She was nearly always ailing in body and irascible in disposition. She had had experiences which would have sent many women into a madhouse hopelessly insane.

She was the sharp, knife-edged fulcrum which carried the enormous weight of the balance of power between Catholic and Protestant, between France and Spain, between England and Scotland. She had need of counselors, it is true, but above all she needed men who could be trusted to do their work without noise or embroilment, who did not ask for money save when it was returned to her a hundredfold.

CHAPTER XV

"THE LUCK OF THE QUEEN"

March 9, 1588.



IR: As I made up my other letter, Captain Frobisher doth advertise me that he spake with two ships that came presently from Lisbon, who declared unto him for certainty the King of Spain's fleet doth depart from Lisbon unto the Groyne [Corunna] the 15th of this month by their account. Sir, there is none that comes from Spain but brings this advertisement, and if it be true I am afraid it will not be helped when the time serveth. Surely this charge that Her Majesty is at is either too much or too little, and the stay that is made of Sir Francis Drake going out I am afraid will breed great peril and if the King of Spain do send forces either into this Realm, Ireland or Scotland, the Queen's Majesty shall say—"The Duke of Parma is treating of a peace, and therefore it is not princely done of his master to do so in the time of treaty."—but what is that to the purpose if we have by that a casado? And if Her Majesty cannot show the King's hand his servant's hand will be but a bad warrant, if they have their wish.

So wrote the High Admiral Lord Howard of Effingham, from Margate Roads to Sir Francis Walsyngham

on March 9, 1588. It was a mild enough document such as any man in Howard's position would write, expressing temperately the anxiety of those who knew of the vast mobilisation proceeding while Elizabeth's commissioners ran up expense accounts and the Hollanders did the same. We have a picture of the times in a letter from Antwerp to the House of Fugger at Augsburg.

> I wrote from Middelburg [he says] informing you that the Hollanders and Zealanders were sending some of their emissaries to join the commissioners of the Queen of England at Ostend. There are eight of them . . . great gladness and rejoicing at the Hague in Holland among the nobility and notables because the English Governor at Bergen-op-Zoom in the name of the Queen of England has settled all questions touching Holland in peace and amity. Count Maurice of Nassau gave a banquet and the Lord above mentioned gave a brilliant feast at which joy and high spirits were supreme. Court von Holloch [Philip von Hohenlohe, son-in-law of William of Orange] at this banquet tried for a jest to bend his rapier in a hoop right around his body, but it broke and wounded his arm in two places. . . . On the 21st inst. the English commissioners [Lord Derby, Sir James Crofts, Lord Cobham, and Sir Amyas Paulet] and the Prince of Parma welcomed each other with much pomp, embraced and exchanged compliments in the open field and beneath the blue sky at Odenberg between Ostend and Bruges. . . .

So says the busy gossip in Antwerp. Parma, however, writes to King Philip on the 13th of May that he

was himself only in the vicinity, disguised as a rabbit-catcher (*con achaque de andar a caca de conejos*) on the dunes near by, noting, as became a good general, the condition of the fortifications of Ostende. It was his intention to move forward at the earliest opportunity, for the possession of that city was important for the great adventure of landing an army in England.

Parma was under no illusion as to the task before him. It might be, as the Spanish and Vatican hotheads urged incessantly, easy to land an army. What then? He told Philip in plain words he would have to fight "battle after battle." He knew, too, the treacherous character of those seas and the great need of a good harbour at each end. Parma, indeed, must have been in no great spirits these days, for they were days to try the soul of a competent commander. There is a curious letter from the Duke to Philip in the beginning of this momentous year. Parma had been told to expect the Armada in September, 1587. It did not come. Parma, by some queer turn of negligence, was left uninformed of the postponement. A letter came from Philip. That masterpiece of leaden-footed incompetence suggested that Parma might have landed in England without waiting for a fleet. Parma for once in his life loses his patience, but not his temper. He speaks strongly but justly and with all respect. He explains to the recluse of Madrid that the vessels built at Antwerp are scows, flat-bottomed transports, and need fine weather. He points out that he had been ordered to wait for Santa Cruz. He goes on: "Let your Majesty give me an absolute command and I will execute it. To write to me as if I should have acted in contradiction to your instructions is naturally distressing to me. Do me the signal kindness to tell me what to do, and no difficulty shall stop me, though you bid me cross alone in a

barge." And he adds, significantly: "The united fleets of the English and the rebels are formidable."

But Philip, and Parma, too, were broke. In spite of all the wealth of the Indies pouring into Spain the exchequer was drained, and Parma reports that he had borrowed four hundred thousand crowns (about a million sterling in our money) in Antwerp, and it had netted him, after exchange and interest, about three hundred thousand. And they were all used up. He could borrow no more. Europe was in the grip of the bankers, the Fuggers, Malvendas, Spinolas, Formanos, Dorias, Saulis, and Pallavicinis, the De Looes and Lanfranchis. A year before Philip's obligations to these gentlemen were figured in Rome at over six million crowns. He had already, in 1586, defaulted. After his death, at the end of the century, the young King assumed this debt and levied a tax on grain and flour. But in the year of the Great Adventure Philip was depending upon the Pope for a million crowns at least for financing the gigantic undertaking. And Sixtus V, as shrewd and avaricious as Elizabeth herself, had promised that million—when the Spanish army was on English soil. But not a crown before.

What might have happened if Philip's high admirals, Santa Cruz presiding, had not postponed their departure in 1587, is an interesting problem to reflect upon. England, as Parma tells Philip with the calm assurance of a great leader on the spot, was not ready, nor anywhere near ready. Frobisher under Howard, with his tiny squadron keeping watch off Dover, had no support. Neither fleet nor army lay behind him. Drake's ships were in the yards, unrigged, unprovisioned, and without crews. The four great Queen's ships, *Triumph, White Bear, Elizabeth Jonas,* and *Victory,* lay out of commission at Chatham. Lord Howard

writes to Walsyngham in a passion of grief and indignation. Of them, he says:

> I am out of hope ever to see them abroad. What need soever shall be if things fall out, as is most likeliest, they shall be to keep Chatham Church when they should serve the turn abroad. They look daily at Dunkirk for 1,200 mariners out of France.

Early in April he writes Walsyngham that it is no time now to dock the *Bonaventure,* as she was fit to serve, "or fit for the fire." And Walsyngham writes to Sir William Russell at Flushing a day or so later: "I see no disposition in Her Majesty to take a thorough course."

Her Majesty, indeed, was lucky. Her eyes were fixed on the maintenance of her throne and realm by keeping a course between the rival factions. It seems as though she were unaware of the peril hovering over both throne and realm. It is too rash to suppose the Spanish army could have conquered England and made her an extension of the Spanish Netherlands. England, as the next few years did show, contained unsuspected reserves of racial energy. The English star was rising, the Spanish star was descending into the darkness. And navies, after all, are not merely of the timbers, cordage, and metal, but of men. Not even Parma would have denied that Elizabeth had the men.

And then at the critical moment in the fortunes of his King and country, Alvaro de Bassanio, Marquis de Santa Cruz, a veteran of seventy-eight years, the victor of Lepanto and the creator of the Spanish navy of his time, suddenly died in the midst of the last rush of work before sailing. The loss, in this particular case, was irreparable. If ever a leader was indispensable, it was

Santa Cruz in 1588, to support Parma in his invasion of England. Parma himself was outspoken in his regret. It would have been interesting to have had Parma's verbal comments upon the messengers flying in day after day from Medina-Sidonia when the Armada was in action. If ever rank put a man into a job for which he was by temperament and experience unfitted it was when Medina-Sidonia took command of Spain's mighty Armada and sent it to destruction.

Her Majesty was lucky. Even to Santa Cruz, skillful and successful as he was at Lepanto, at Ragusa, and at Terceira, when poor Strozzi tried to substitute courage for brains, the waters between the Lizard and Margate Roads were a separate problem. Tradition was too strong for him. It is remarkable that neither he nor his admirals, de Leyva, Olevaraez, de Recalde, and Pedro de Valdez, although the latter were familiar with the Channel, seemed to have hit upon the real nature of Drake's success. They were obsessed with size. It seemed a logical and inexorable conclusion, to them, that a big ship would beat a small one. Even the experience of de Leyva in 1586 in the Mediterranean, when five English merchantmen, sailing home from the Levant, fought eleven Spanish galleons, sank one and beat off the others, was neglected when the constitution of the Armada was decided upon. To the purely military mind—and it must be remembered that the military mind dominated Europe in the sixteenth century—those low rakish vessels of the English corsairs, slipping in and out of harbour so smoothly, were of no significance in a real engagement at all. All very well for running away, but how could they impede the onset of huge twelve-hundred-ton battle-ships with their prodigious weight of metal? It may be doubted whether Santa Cruz himself perceived the trend of events. Perhaps he had the genius to cope with Howard, Drake,

and Frobisher in their own seas. He might have left the soldiers and treasure a day behind, and drawn off the English fleet, with his line-of-battle ships, to the westward, thus giving the transports a chance to slip through the Sleeve and make sail up Channel. He might have sailed straight into Plymouth and fought the matter to a finish inside, and his great galleons would have had a better chance thereby.

But he died, and Philip, in an unwise moment, decided that the Duke of Medina-Sidonia, governor-general of Andalusia, son-in-law of the Princess Eboli, a royal favourite, should be appointed to the vacancy. Perhaps Philip imagined, not being familiar to any extent with the sea, that the man could support with suitable dignity the position of a figurehead. It was natural enough for that haughty and aloof sovereign to suppose that his Armada, so huge and formidable in equipment, would move with majestic precision upon its appointed course, crushing in irresistible mass-inertia any presumptuous galleons and caravels in the way. Only upon some such assumption can we explain the formation in which Medina-Sidonia essayed to pass up the English Channel. Whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad. He had no Channel pilots. These ships were congested with soldiers and their horses and armour, with six hundred priests, with chests of bullion, and with chapels full of ecclesiastical lumber. But indeed the unfortunate grandee thus immolated upon the altar of his monarch's insufferable pride (*non sufficit orbis*) knew scarcely more than that he was ill-equipped for the command. Had he been even a military man with experience in the Netherlands, he might have learned something from the cosmopolitan rabble on the quays of Lisbon. But he could neither formulate a method to deal with his own problems nor comprehend

those of Parma behind the dunes of Ostende and Nieuport.

Admiral Howard wrote on the 9th of March concerning the news communicated by Frobisher. On the following day Parma wrote to his King two letters full of admirable counsel and sound sense. He is for peace. He believes the English to be sincere in their proposals for peace, and he is confident that Elizabeth has no intention of insisting upon religious toleration in the States General. He is sanguine that Elizabeth intends to give up the coast towns to him upon adequate security and evacuation of the Spanish armies. "You will not conquer England," he says, drily but with courtesy and sense notwithstanding, "but your fleet will be secure, and you will risk no disaster. . . . The English have had time to arm by sea and land. They have their leagues with Denmark and the Germans and the French Protestants, who will do all they can . . . to interfere with us. Your Majesty's intentions are blown abroad and are notorious to every one."

He continues in this vein, adding sagely that if he be permitted to make peace and Walcheren Island with its towns of Flushing and Middelburg handed over to himself once more, Philip can wait for a suitable opportunity to spring again at England's throat, "A pretext can never long be wanting."

In the other letter he minces no words, however. Instead of thirty thousand men he has only seventeen thousand. Everybody knows he is planning to descend upon England, and the peace parley is the only pretense he can indulge in at the moment. He points out, again, that even after he is landed in England, "We shall find as much work as we can do." He alludes to "the astonishing and distressing mortality" among his troops and his failure to raise any more money in Cologne. He has "a motley army of all nations and there will be mutiny

and irreparable disorder." "The Lord," he adds, with a premonition which no doubt was recalled by his master and himself a few months later—"the Lord may purpose to chastise us for our sins with some sharp misfortune."

Medina-Sidonia had a motley army, too. The Gallegan peasants in the crews were kept in camps under guard lest those taciturn and obstinate beings run away home to their farms. The Portuguese yokels, not understanding orders in Castilian, were a constant menace to the peace of the port. Indeed, among the free men in the fleet six languages were spoken. Germans and Italians and Greeks were there aplenty, for Germans and Italians were the principal professional mercenaries of Europe. We read in Guicciardini that the Spanish dislike of work inevitably brought in races who were less squeamish and more competent. The Spanish hidalgos from Burgos and Valladolid had no intention, when they arrived to go on board the great galleons, of doing any work. The base-born slaves would row or sail the ship, the equally base-born German and Flemish gunners would fire shots at the heretics, the heretics would flee, and the hidalgos, in velvets and plumes and gleaming corselets, with their servants and retainers, would step ashore in England and assume the position of overlords in that benighted island. This picture is by no means extravagant. The Invincible Armada carried more carpets, furniture, regalia, and jewelry than a modern department store and more money than many a bank has in its vaults.

Parma's letters, as was soon apparent, produced no effect at all. Philip appears through this period as a man in a daze. When the news of the Armada's destruction finally reached him he went into a coma. He had always been "leaden-footed" and now the paralysis seems to have crept upward until his brain became in-

capable of functioning. Compared with him, Elizabeth, with all her extraordinary duplicity, her inexplicable dalliance on the very verge of disaster, is an entrancing figure of the time.

But if she had one fault transcending all others, it was a senseless and unintelligent parsimony. The bickerings of historians, the evidence of contemporaries, and the records of the state papers are unable to shake the iron fact of Elizabeth's "maddened grasp" as Froude calls it, upon her money. And at the very moment when the seamen should have been issued extra rations, and provided with a little extra money to refurnish their kits, Elizabeth permitted some inspired idiot (to speak with charity of the obscure dead) to substitute for salt beef and dried mutton a foreign diet of peas, fish, and olive oil, on board her ships. Says the fleet order for March 12, 1588:

> Every man's victual of beef standeth her Majesty fourpence the day. . . . So the mess being four persons it amounteth to sixteen pence the day for their meat besides bread and drink. By altering that kind of victual for fish, oil and peas, her Majesty's charge will be but three pence for three fishes the day at ten shillings the hundred of Newland [Newfoundland] fish, two pence in oil for the mess the day and two pence in peas at two shillings the bushel with one penny on every mess for casks and other charges which is half the charge that beef did stand.

That such provender made men sick will not astonish any one, especially when it is borne in mind that beer, and bad beer at that, was still issued with the fish and oil. Had there been a supply of wine, such as Mediterranean sailors drink every day, the diet might have

passed. But the folly of such a change at such a time, when Englishmen's hearts were aflame with ardour, when extraordinary physical efforts were called forth at every turn of the tide, and men's bodies needed a full measure of nourishing food and invigorating liquor, is only seen in its sinister outlines against the fact that Elizabeth, the Queen herself, had in her treasury, in the strong rooms of the Tower, half a million sterling, the crown jewels of more than one royal house, and an undiminished credit in Antwerp and Cologne. Nothing that the panegyric philosophers of the Elizabethan era can say will ever erase this shocking blemish from the character of the Virgin Queen. Men gallantly and gladly went to their death for her. They fought short-handed and short of ammunition for her. They died of dysentery and dirt for her. The very least she could have done in return was to have seen that they had enough to eat. But it looms like a sinister shadow through those bright pages of English valour—the exasperated clamour of the admirals for victuals, the patient suffering of the men, the monumental stinginess of the Queen.

It was, of course, nothing new to Frobisher. He had been sent back from Ireland by Admiral Winter in 1580 to explain, as the Admiral's "painful companion," that a fleet cannot keep station unless food be sent for the crew. To us, it seems incredible that ships should have no reserve of provisions. It might be thought that "other days, other ways." But Hawkins and Howard expressly bewail the fact that even in her father's time the provision was for six weeks at least. Says Howard to Burghley:

> Such a thing was never heard of since there were ships in England, as no victuals in store. Her Majesty's father never made a less supply than six

> weeks, and yet there was marvelous help upon extremity, for there were ever provisions at Portsmouth, and also at Dover store ever at hand upon necessity.
>
> And [he says bitterly to Walsyngham] it will not be her money nor her jewels that will help her, for as they will do good in time, so will they help nothing for the redeeming of time being lost. . . . I pray heartily for a peace. . . . for sparing and war have no affinity together.

Who can remain unmoved at this spectacle? Admirals and counselors all; men who have survived the fevers of the jungles and the bitter cold of the Polar wastes, whose eyes are steady from long gazing at death, whose faces are bronzed and bearded; men whose spies whisper to them the very secrets of Philip's chamber and the table talk of the Vatican—wring their hands over the terrible, tight-fisted madness of an ailing unconquerable woman! Who can read that last frantic outburst of Howard's and doubt the present contention: "For the love of Jesus Christ, madam, awake and see the villainous treasons round about you, against your Majesty and the realm"? Who can doubt it when we read of the Queen's fury when the bills come in for wine for men made sick through her poisonous beer and stinking oil?

The case rests. The Queen was lucky. In her own quality of an intrepid woman surrounded by perils; in her commanders and their heroic men; but above all in the mysterious benevolence of destiny which had endowed her with a clairvoyant comprehension of political forces operating subconsciously beneath a parsimony passing the wit of man.

CHAPTER XVI

THE GREAT ARMADAS COME

I SIMPLY must tell you [writes the lively Hamburg correspondent of the Fuggers on June 23, 1588 (O.S.)] that the skipper, Hans Limburger, has arrived here with his vessel from Cadiz. He broke through the embargo, and has a cargo of salt, wine, raisins, cinnamon and a little sugar. He put out from there on the 20th ult. O.S. and passed Lisbon on the 24th. In the distance he saw the Spanish Armada and sailed abreast of it all day. The next day it was blowing rather hard and he could not see it. . . . The skipper met an English warship and this brought him into Plymouth, to Drake's Armada. He was entertained by Drake for three days and the English were rejoicing that the Spanish Armada was at sea. Afterwards Captain Drake gave the skipper a permit so that he might be allowed to pass, and quickly formed in order and put to sea in spite of a contrary wind. If an action is fought, there will be terrible loss of life. On two consecutive days here the sun and moon have been quite bloody. What this signifies the merciful God alone knows. May he defend the Right!

Postscript. Letters have just come from Cologne reporting that the Prince of Parma has news that

the Armada sailed from Lisbon on the 30th of May. God grant it all prosperity.[1]

The bubbling excitement visible in this letter, and the accuracy of the report, make it worthy of transcription here. It bears the same date as Lord Howard's frantic outburst to the Queen already quoted. Whatever Elizabeth and her anxious council might be doing with peace commissioners in Flanders, there was a tenseness in the air all over Europe. All eyes were directed toward Spain. Men seemed to draw a long breath as they contemplated rising with solemn deliberation upon the horizon the dark thunder-clouds of war. It was felt that the supreme struggle was approaching. The age-long tension between the heirs of Charles V and the truculent, bold, and crafty Queen of England, between Holy Church and the heretic, between Spanish grandee and English corsair, was reaching the rupture-point. The Armada, so long foreshadowed, was in very truth at sea.

Frobisher, when Lord Howard received his commission in December of 1587, to invade the Spanish dominions, was still watching the Straits. He was now appointed to the largest ship in the navy, the *Triumph,* eleven hundred tons, with a crew of five hundred men. This vessel with *White Bear, Elizabeth Jonas,* and *Victory,* commanded by Lord Sheffield, Sir Robert Southwell and Captain John Hawkins, respectively, left their station at Chatham, "guarding Chatham Church," early in May and joined Lord Howard in Margate Roads. Lord Henry Seymour, with *Vanguard, Rainbow, Antelope* and a squadron of privateer cruisers, remained to keep Parma bottled up in Dunkirk, while

[1] This report of Hans Limburger seems to dispose of the statement that Drake and the other captains were thunderstruck when the pinnace came in and announced the arrival of the Armada at the Lizard. If they were "rejoicing the Armada was at sea" they might expect it to be approaching.

Howard with the Queen's great ships moved down-Channel to join Drake in Plymouth Sound. They had ammunition for one day's real fighting and stores for a couple of weeks, and the sooner the Armada arrived the better fortune for them. Hence, it may be surmised, arose the "rejoicing" which Skipper Hans Limburger observed when he was in Plymouth. The intervening weeks had been spent, not in playing bowls, as the ancient legends seem to imply, but in careening the ships, washing and tallowing the bottoms, overhauling the gear, and cleaning the armament. Good old John Hawkins, tough survivor of many a slaving enterprise, had done his work as dockyard head. There was not a spoonful of water in the wells. Masts, spars, sails, standing rigging and running gear, were all in prime condition.

All reports agree that the summer of 1588 was an extraordinary season of storms in the Narrow Seas. In an age when men had a real and unconquerable faith in witches, necromancy, and the evil eye, when they believed God intervened to help his chosen people, it is not to be doubted that the English saw in this unusual weather a definite dispensation of Providence. The motto which they adopted, "He blew and they were scattered," seemed, to them, to fit not only their feelings, but the facts. The oldest fisherman on the coast, said Lord Seymour, was unable to recall such a terrible season. Lord Howard did not dare take his great ships into Plymouth Haven while the gale lasted. They might go ashore, and even if their anchors held he would not be able to get to sea again in the teeth of a villainous southwest wind.

At the beginning of July the wind went around to the north and Lord Howard sailed due south along the fourth degree of longitude to Ushant Island, that sinister outpost of Brittany. Drake would have gone

on, sacked the Spanish ports, revictualled his ships and carried the war into the enemy's dominions. Indeed, the original intention of the voyage, maintained in the face of Elizabeth's stupidly repressive orders, had been to sail for the Groyne of Gallicia—*i.e.,* Coruña—and fight the Armada there. But the wind changed. Howard feared the Armada would slip past them in the night, and the English fleet sailed back to Plymouth Sound, leaving a couple of pinnaces to watch off Ushant.

It is customary to divide the forces confronting the Invincible Armada into Queen's ships and privateers. The inference is often unfortunate, for we are prone to imagine the navy of those days to have been kept up, to have had the discipline and equipment of the modern British navy. By the same token we see the privateers as something resembling modern merchantmen, utilitarian instruments of private gain. The comparison is misleading. With the exception of a few men of high rank, like Howard and Seymour, and a few veterans who had been in Queen's ships all their lives, like Winter and Beeston, there was practically no difference between warship and privateer. A ship like the *Aid* had been sent with Frobisher to Meta Incognita and was here now "in sufficient order for any sudden service" so Peter Pett declared, waiting for the Spanish Armada. On the other hand, Drake's force was composed, except for his own ship, *Revenge,* of privately-owned vessels. All the ships going to sea, even in the coasting trade, with the exception of hulks, hoys, and cromsters, were warships. They carried guns and their crews were used to fighting Spaniards, Turks, Sallee Rovers and local pirates indiscriminately. It is, therefore, useless to make fine distinctions as to the particular service in which the English ships and captains were registered. The fleet, to a degree almost incredible at this day, was a private venture. Elizabeth

had, with an uncanny intuition, found the method best adapted to the peculiar blend of patriot and pirate of which her captains and sailors were made. Spain had subsidised her fleet heavily. Elizabeth had left her seamen to their own devices. She had a revenue of about four hundred thousand pounds on which to run the whole country. Learning to tax the English was a long and difficult process. Indictments of the Queen's parsimony are not based upon the vastnesses of her resources. They were indeed restricted. She expected the great lords, who had been the recipients of royal generosity, to do their part. Her stinginess was revealed in her blank refusal to utilise for the defense of her realm the half-million sterling reserve and the extensive treasure in the Tower vaults. It was revealed in the ferocity with which she struck out from the expense accounts the most trifling items which the least humane of her captains had allowed for their splendid men. It was revealed in the grotesque system by which she doubled the cost of victualling. The least of her servants in the treasury could have told her that short contracts cost more than long ones. Partisans of the Queen deafen us with their claims for her intelligence. It was certainly not revealed in her management of the navy. It was like getting blood out of a stone to secure the bare necessities of existence. She could give extravagant presents to worthless princelings and foreign humbugs, but she had only a sharp reprimand for Drake, the greatest naval commander of his time, because he had the temerity to "waste" power at target practice when a foreign fleet was actually approaching her realm.

It is a remarkable commentary of the age of Shakespeare (he was twenty-four years old at this crisis of England's history) that we have no clear contemporary narrative of the naval action against the Spanish Ar-

mada beyond the special account devoted to the personal experiences of the High Admiral. It remained for naval writers of our times to elucidate and correct the popular conception of what took place.

The *Triumph,* Frobisher's flagship, was a galleon, or, as he himself probably pronounced it, "galloon," with twenty-eight guns to the broadside, six demi-cannon forward and four firing astern. Compared with the huge galleasses of the Spaniards, which were large vessels with sails and hundreds of oars, she was a small ship, but she was fast, clean, and well manned. Of her company of five hundred probably two hundred were seamen. The English ships were more adequately manned than the Spanish or Portuguese. The *Santiago* had only eighty seamen to three hundred soldiers. Frobisher had also a large number of skiffs, some of which probably were in tow with crews steering, and which on one occasion at least saved the *Triumph* from being boarded. With such equipment it is obvious that the *Triumph* was not overmanned. Allowing three men to each gun and a couple of score to bring up powder and shot, carpenters, cooks, and boys would account for threescore more, leaving two hundred seamen proper at the beginning of the action. But they were all, one might say, on their toes. They were all of one race, be it remembered also in passing. It so happened that neither Scottish nor Irish genius was available in the great struggle now impending. Scotland, in so far as she was a nation and not an aggregation of clans, was Catholic and pro-French. Ireland, left for the time being, as one historian drily phrases it, "to her congenial anarchy," was unaware of any system of government more complex than the despotism of her chieftains. Wales, it is true, shares in England's glory. One of the most remarkable exploits of those days in July was that of one David Gwynne, a Welsh sailor who was

A Sixteenth-century Galleon

a galley slave on board a Portuguese galleasse. We read of him in Hakluyt, who describes "the assistance and courage of one David Gwin an English captive" (whom the French and Turkish slaves aided in the same enterprise). Gwynne was set free during the storm which scattered the Armada in the Bay of Biscay, to assist the terrified captain with his seamanship. He managed to liberate his companions, murdered every Spaniard and Portuguese on board, rammed another galleasse, set the oarsmen free, and made for the French coast. It is an intriguing tale and the feat would have earned the intrepid David a number of highly prized medals in our day; but the Elizabethans (and David himself no doubt) considered that he had been amply rewarded by escaping from the slavery of the oars.

It is a strange and notable tribute to the peculiar character of the men involved, that no one has ever alluded to the entire absence of slaves in the English ships. That captured Spaniards suffered in retribution for the horrible cruelties practiced upon Englishmen by the Inquisition and the slave-masters is not to be denied. But of forced labor, other than the impressing of seamen for Queen's ships, we hear nothing. Indeed, at the time of the Armada our wonder is reserved, not for the rigours of discipline, but the indomitable nature of the volunteers who stayed by their ships without wages or victuals for the adventure and the glory of the enterprise.

There is a strange glimpse of Elizabethan England in the stories of Sir Francis Walsyngham lying sick in bed, "waiting for his fit,"—for he was subject to epilepsy—while the messages from all over Europe poured in upon him. They came from Leicester, Winter, Howard, Seymour, Drake, and Hawkins. Twenty thousand Essex men arrive to join Leicester's army at Tilbury, and there is neither bread, cheese, nor beer

for them. A letter from Torbay comes. The crew of a Spanish ship driven ashore is captured. What shall we do with them? Send us money. Lord Howard writes that he is doing well, but he must have powder and provisions. Drake reports in the same strain. Send powder and provisions. Captain Hawkins bluntly states that his mariners are unpaid and he must have money to pay them.

And Walsyngham, for all his craft, can do nothing. The Queen is a law unto herself. She has only just recalled her commissioners from the Duke of Parma, although the only barrier between her own county of Kent and Parma's men-at-arms is Lord Henry Seymour's fleet of hungry English mariners. The captains and mariners must contrive as best they may. Elizabeth was very merry at court these days. She seems to have suspected every one of her commanders of being either a wasteful fool or an unscrupulous knave, sworn to defraud her of her last shilling. When the battle was finally joined and the cry for powder and bullets became a shout, she made the long-suffering council send down to ask for the exact proportion of ammunition required. The Invincible Armada was defeated, not by strategists in Whitehall, not by military aristocrats, nor yet by the leadership of the Sovereign, but by the mariners of England.

While Lord Howard and his ships were rolling heavily in the Sound, the wind being once more from the southwest, the Armada, after many preliminary disasters and at least one return to a Spanish port, was approaching. We have much more detailed information concerning the ships in the Spanish fleet than of the English. We are acquainted with the formation and the orders King Philip had issued to the Duke of Medina-Sidonia. And in order to explain the adventures of Frobisher in this crisis of his career as a naval

man it is advisable to give a brief outline of the enemy squadrons.

The old story, that the Armada sailed up to Plymouth in the form of a crescent moon was natural enough to unnautical and inexperienced observers. No fleet could have kept in such formation under sail, however, even had it been a sane and useful manœuvre. The Armada had explicit orders to effect a junction with Parma at once, even to evading a battle in the open sea and running the risk of the English fleet bottling them up in the Channel. Drake's plan had been originally to engage the enemy off his own coasts. Now he was already arrived, Drake would have let them through and crushed them between opposing squadrons. Howard's policy, and he seems to have had no larger view of the action, was to nibble at them, to pluck their feathers, as he said. And this metaphor probably is the key to the mind of the High Admiral. He was impressed by the far-flung massiveness of the Armada. It is also the key to the Spanish formation, which was, as Pigafetta tells us, like an eagle with outstretched wings.

The Armada, to be plain, was not a simple fighting machine. It was a migration, a crusade, a vast heterogeneous congregation of assorted nationals under a flag bearing on one side the crucified Saviour and on the other the Virgin Mary. It bore within those enormous hulls the hopes of the Catholic world. It was one of the last grandiose gestures of the haughty people of the Peninsula before they began to descend the sombre slopes toward national oblivion. At the sight of so mighty a fleet many of the English must have felt dubiously as to the outcome. But for the captains it was the great day of their lives.

Sighted off the Lizard on Friday, July 19, O.S., news of the Armada was carried into the Sound by a

pinnace. Coming up Channel with a fair wind. The word was passed, and as the beacons flared from hill to hill and horsemen sped along the valley roads to London (send powder and provisions!), the English ships were warped out one by one from behind Mount Edgecombe, opposite the Hoe, across Cawsand Bay, and anchored under the lee of Rame Head. This masterly manœuvre was inspired by the assumption that Medina would inevitably cork them up in the Sound and, letting drive fireships among them, effect their entire destruction, precisely as Drake had proposed to deal with them in the Tagus. A few small privateers were slowly taking position behind the Queen's ships.

At last, at three o'clock of the Saturday afternoon, the Armada, a hundred and fifty sail, were sighted from the hilltop and Lord Howard weighed anchor.

Medina-Sidonia now committed a serious blunder. If he had intended to carry out Philip's orders he should have stood away, south of the Eddystone, and made off up-Channel. But he was so sure of his own overwhelming strength that he hove to for the night.

So far he had seen practically nothing of the English fleet. During the night his lookouts saw ships, like shadows, tacking to and fro between the Spanish ships and the shore. What he did not see was the whole main battle fleet of Lord Howard standing away to the south across his bows. It was raining at times and the visibility was low. In the morning the English were coming up on the wind upon his rear, in line of battle, joined by the small ships who had been seen tacking to and fro in Whitesand Bay.

The *Ark Royal,* Lord Howard's flagship, and three other great ships sailed along the line of galleons heeling over to the wind, and poured in their broadsides between wind and water. The other English ships carried out the same manœuvre on the two wings, wearing

round and sailing back again to give the helpless galleons the other broadside. The Second Division of the Spanish forces consisted of lines of galleons followed by pataches and zabras, small beaked sailing-vessels with light guns, and urcas, which seem to have been horse-transports for cavalry and storeships.

Nothing of this description had ever been seen before at sea, according to the Spanish reports. The ease with which the well-tallowed English ships eluded even the galleasses with their hundreds of oars savoured of necromancy and kindred arts. The listing of the Spanish galleons made their guns useless. They fired over the enemy's masts. But the *San Juan,* flagship of the right wing, had her spars, masts, and rigging shot through and many killed.

So far we have no news of Frobisher. But something took place on Sunday evening which Frobisher evidently saw and which brought him later into violent collision with Drake. It is an occurrence remarkable only when we inject into Elizabethan times our own conceptions of official integrity. Once we have made the requisite adjustment of values, Drake's conduct becomes normal and comprehensible.

Thoroughly aware by the evening of the 21st that the English were much more dangerous than he had expected, Medina-Sidonia ordered his more powerful ships, of the Biscayan Squadron, to cover the rear, and all ships were to make sail, in the rising westerly wind, up-Channel for Calais. The 1,200-ton *Capitana,* of the Andalusian Squadron, the flagship of Pedro de Valdes, swung round and carried away the bowsprit of the *Santa Catalina.* The foremast fell overboard and the ship lost way. The seas were rising and two great galleasses failed to keep hold of the *Catalina's* hawser. She was left falling away behind.

Now Drake was, in the naval phrase of the times,

bearing the lantern. The fleet was following his light during the night, as they supposed. What Drake actually did seems to have been this: A number of Flemish vessels with the Armada began to make off up-Channel in the freshening gale. Drake pursued them, accompanied by the *Bear* and *Mary Rose*. Lord Howard, Frobisher and Hawkins continued through the night, following what they imagined to be Drake's lantern. In the morning they discovered that the lantern ahead was Spanish. They were in the middle of the Armada. Without delay the English wore round and put themselves out of danger. It has been contended that Drake, when he saw the mysterious vessels making off in the darkness, was justified in giving chase without warning the rest of the fleet. But he was bearing the lantern. That Howard's watch-keepers did not see either the Flemish ships or Drake may have been due to their attention being concentrated upon the light ahead. The orders were to follow the light ahead. When they no longer saw the light of Drake's lantern, they very naturally picked up what they imagined was his, and followed that.

In the meanwhile, by a stroke of good fortune which the eulogists of Sir Francis have found more than a little embarrassing, Drake returned from his chase of the Flemish merchantmen and at dawn discovered himself alongside the disabled *Catalina,* Don Pedro de Valdez commanding. All night de Valdez had driven off various English ships who had attacked him, but instantly, so the story goes, he capitulated to the mighty Drake and expressed his satisfaction at being captured by so eminent a seaman.

Fifty-five thousand ducats were found in her chests and the ship with her four hundred odd men was sent to Torbay, where much powder was taken from her hold and rushed out to Lord Howard's fleet. Drake,

with his distinguished prisoner, hastened after the fleet himself. It is noteworthy that from this episode until the Armada reached the North Sea the narrative is silent as to the doings of Drake.

The luck of the Spaniards deserted them when they lay to outside Plymouth. Only a commander preoccupied with the military dispositions on shore, and secure in his own impregnable strength, could have made such a blunder. All the way up-Channel the unhappy and bewildered crews had no surcease from disaster. The great galleon *San Salvador,* carrying the Paymaster-General of the Armada and his cargo of money, blew up. A Flemish master gunner, says Ubaldino, whose family life had been disrupted by the gallantries of Spanish officers in Cadiz, was upbraided by the captain and struck with a cane, as though he were a slave at the oar. Retreating below, he put a lighted linstock in a barrel of powder and plunged into the sea through a gun port. The whole deck of the galleon was lifted off, including the poop-castle, with the force of the explosion. Nearly two hundred men went into the air. Long after the smoking hulk was left behind by the fleet, Lord Thomas Howard came up to inspect her and found fifty charred and mutilated Spaniards lying among the wreckage, still living but almost unapproachable through the stench of their burning flesh. They were sent ashore, and the wreck was found to contain not only money, but powder uninjured in the lower holds.

In twenty-four hours the Armada had lost two flagships, one admiral, seven hundred and fifty men, and a hundred thousand ducats. One other ship was out of action and many hundreds of men were wounded. The English had lost neither a single ship nor a single man. The ports were jammed with volunteers. Lord

Howard had to turn them away. Ammunition was coming down from Dover. When Monday morning dawned, with Howard, Frobisher, and Hawkins lying to for Drake and Sheffield to come up, the first round of the contest had been won by the English.

CHAPTER XVII

KNIGHTHOOD AT SEA

ON MONDAY morning the sea was calm. The wind, as usual in summer, being easterly, the Duke imagined that the time was come to bear down upon the enemy and force a genuine engagement. The great galleons streamed out one behind the other, according to their relative speeds, while the English stood away. Ammunition was not yet to hand. But things were moving that way. As the huge *San Marcos,* swiftest of the galleons, came up with her own ships, Elizabeth in London was irritably ordering her commissioners to abandon the negotiations with the Duke of Parma and come home. There was every hope that she would authorise the issue of powder, shot, and stores for the fleet. One despatch boat followed another up-Channel with the same message. Horseman after horseman pounded through Hampshire and Surrey to London, their letters marked, "Haste, haste! Haste for thy life! Post haste!"

As soon as the *San Marcos* was well ahead of her consorts the wind, as usual, swung to the south. Howard and his admirals closed round her. She was a big, powerful vessel, over a thousand tons, and she fired eighty rounds in an hour and a half. The English poured over five hundred into her before the other Spaniards came up and chased them off. So imagined

Sidonia; but the actual cause of the retreat was lack of ammunition.

Tuesday morning the fleets were bearing up to Portland Bill. It was here that Frobisher came into the prominence which he was to maintain until his death. It was characteristic of him that he should have converted a technical blunder into a deed of imperishable glory. It is true, as Corbett says, "of all the engagements of the Armada campaign none is more difficult to unravel than the battle of Portland." But it seems that the general disposition of the English fleet in the morning was due to their failure to get the weather-gage of the Spaniards. They were thus straggled out over a considerable area. Sidonia's galleons tried to grapple and board them, and failed. Lord Howard was being cut off when he bore away before a N.N.E. wind to join his fleet. The Spaniards gave chase.

Sidonia himself, however, in the *San Martin,* impressed by the size of the *Triumph* and esteeming it imperative to achieve some such capture, seized the opportunity. To his utter exasperation his four great galleasses, fifty guns and three hundred rowers, were making no attempt to engage. Sidonia sailed near enough to the flagship of de Moncada, who was in command, and gave him a broadside of vituperative abuse which was, observed a Spanish eye-witness, "the reverse of complimentary." There lay the *Triumph* with her five consorts close inshore off Portland Bill, isolated and an easy prey. Could he not see his chance to do something?

The galleasses bore up into the fight and the four huge vessels began to rake the English squadron with their broadsides. Frobisher was in danger and the other vessels of the fleet which were not curtained with smoke could see it. Supposing the wind to have been, roughly, southeast, the smoke would have been to the

disadvantage of Frobisher, but would not have obscured him.

What happened was something entirely beyond any previous experience of the Spanish captains. Unequal as the contest was, the *Triumph,* forty-one guns and twenty-six quick-firers (demi-culverines and sakers), was pouring into her formidable antagonists a hail of stone and iron shot. Organisation, in a naval sense, had gone by the board. It was now a case of ding-dong hammer-and-tongs fighting. The Spaniards were determined to board. Frobisher, by superb seamanship, though keeping almost yardarm to yardarm, was not to be boarded.

Suddenly the wind shifted to south-southwest, putting him to leeward of the English main fleet. Lord Howard prepared to join him. *Ark Royal, Elizabeth Jonas, Leicester, Golden Lion, Victory, Mary Rose, Dreadnought* and *Swallow* bore down upon the hard-pressed *Triumph.*

Seeing his intention, Sidonia himself, with sixteen great galleons, started to intercept. But the change of wind had enabled Drake, far away to southward, to cut off and attack the *San Juan,* which had been the centre of a tempest of balls on the Sunday off Plymouth. In fact, the *San Juan* was again being shot through and through. Sidonia sent his galleons to the rescue and proceeded alone toward Frobisher. Lord Howard saw his chance instantly, and changing his course, made for the *San Martin.*

The English, following their admiral in formation of line-ahead, poured broadside upon broadside into the unwieldy flagship. Worse still, Drake, coming up on the wind after dealing with the *San Juan,* followed Howard and raked the *San Martin* again. It was at this point that the fortunes of the Armada seemed deserted by the higher powers. The Holy Banner was

shot in two, the masts were sagging perilously as the rigging was cut away, and the hull was riddled with shot-holes in the waterline. Pitifully the consorts moved as fast as they could to the assistance of their admiral. Lord Howard describes them as "flocking together like sheep," and the homely phrase gives one a vivid picture of those unfortunate vessels. They were outpointed and outwitted. They had lost heart, and when men lose heart they lose everything. They were so unfamiliar with the new school of naval warfare that when the English ships fired into them and passed on, only to be replaced by yet others, the Spaniards, who had grappled and boarded at Lepanto and broken the Turkish power in the Mediterranean, imagined the English were running away!

Nevertheless, the English commanders saw clearly that they must make a change in their organisation. The fleet was too large to handle from one ship. Corbett says:

> The impossibility of handling so large a number of ships without squadronal organisation, and the inevitable tendency of such a structureless mass to fall in unequal groups each working for its own hand, was brought home to them. At the same time the tactical advantage of the independent action of squadrons had been as convincingly demonstrated. To the Spaniards, at any rate, it was clear that what had turned the fortune of the day and snatched a victory from their grasp was the attack of the squadron which had stolen to windward of them under cover of the smoke. To the more experienced English officers it must have been equally evident. Frobisher, it is true, was generally regarded as the hero of the day, and rightly so, for sheer hard fighting. His long and brilliant defence

A Caravel of the Early Seventeenth Century

of the isolated vessels against the four galleasses was certainly not surpassed in the whole course of the war, unless by the last fight of the *Revenge*.

Next day Lord Howard proceeded to reorganise his fleet formation. It is worthy of remark that for the first time a fleet went into action in four divisions, commanded by Howard, Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher. Corbett suggests that this curious but successful innovation was primarily designed to give Frobisher a divisional command, after his remarkable performance against the galleasses. This is a reasonable surmise, always keeping in mind the embryonic conception of naval fighting in the Elizabethan era. Had Drake and Howard possessed the professional insight Sir Julian occasionally attributes to them, they would scarcely have remodelled their dispositions to make room for a man who had got himself into a tight place by reckless seamanship and got himself out of it by still more reckless fighting. Frobisher fell into precisely the same difficulty on the Thursday, when, in an affair with the galleases once more, he astounded all observers by the extraordinary audacity of his seamanship and the tenacity with which he held on to his prey, sailing almost yardarm to yardarm and turning the close-packed galleasses into shambles with the accuracy and rapidity of his fire. It may be doubted whether the Spanish or Portuguese captains had experienced anything like this before in their lives. The method of boarding they knew, of disabling an enemy by shooting away his rigging, throwing grappling irons and carrying his deck with a rush of men armed with cutlasses and pikes. But this was a combination of nimble manœuvring and the incessant placing of round-shot squarely through the strakes between their decks, disabling the guns and

throwing the soldiers, hardy as they were in open field, into the panic-stricken terror of animals trapped in an unfamiliar hell. The minds of thousands of military men, the first soldiers in Europe, were distraught still farther by the suspicion growing with deadly swiftness that their own mariners were useless, their gunners incompetent and the whole adventure a nightmare of nausea and massacre. The noise within those heaving, splintering walls must have been stunning. The rapidity of the salvos, the close range of the English broadsides, so close that the heavy black smoke came rolling through the gaping breaches, added to their misery and stupefaction. For the unhappy peasants of Gallicia and the unwilling aliens chained to their enormous oars, we have no means of estimating the appalling effect upon their superstitious minds.

This second action, off the Isle of Wight, resulted in practically exhausting the English ammunition. Lord Howard was in the peculiar position of being overwhelmed with recruits, for whom there were neither provisions nor powder. It is a problem to decide whether the Queen had any clear notion of what was going on less than a hundred miles from her chamber. Certainly no power known to her counsellors could release more than a few days' victuals at a time. She seemed sullenly persuaded, now that the peace commissioners were back home, that the war had been inaugurated by Drake and Howard for their own aggrandisement. Admitting that a seaman's allowance was a generous one,[1] the tremendous outpouring of physical and spiritual energy required replenishments. But the most vigorous watch was maintained by the Queen's orders, not only over all issues from dockyard

[1] Corbett (*Drake and the Tudor Navy*) says that the sixteenth-century English seaman was as much of a problem to feed as the modern British soldier.

stores, but also over the very captures from the enemy which the seamen's dauntless courage had secured.

But in the fleet, save for the incessant demand for stores, the mood was to ignore the people at home and proceed to annihilate the enemy. Howard's problem was a difficult one. He was confident, with men like Drake, Hawkins, Frobisher, Winter, and Beeston, that he could render a good account of himself. But the Spaniards were very strong. Howard speaks more than once in his letters in a way which shows how doubtful he was of really pulling down the giant Armada and destroying it before Parma could land in England. He tells Walsyngham that they "were still wonderful great and strong." And this was after Gravelines! And again he alludes to "plucking the feathers of the Spaniards one by one." Drake is credited with the plan to attack them boldly and destroy them. But Drake had not the responsibility of the fleet on his shoulders. That was definitely proved on the night of the lantern episode, when he sailed off on a chase of his own. So celebrated a corsair was a difficult second in command for Lord Howard. We should not blame Howard for resenting the popular tendency to praise Drake for the English successes and to censure himself for their failures. If Howard was doubtful of his power to cripple Sidonia, who can blame him! The winds and the waves fought very strongly for England in those days. Never were the stormy Narrow Seas so faithful to their charge. As we read the story to-day it is difficult to disbelieve in some sort of providence taking a hand. It was the decisive battle of the century, and from the time they opened Plymouth everything went wrong for the Spaniards. Analysis, however, is better than vague theories of providence. The dramatic quality of the encounter lay in the contrast between the old order of the Spanish mediæval naval school and the new order of English

seamen. That those seamen learned their trade largely in piracy is a side issue. Spanish intolerance of international commerce had made piracy inevitable. Spanish intolerance of any religion save their own had sharpened the antagonism to bitter hate. Contempt and pride had made the Spaniards ignorant of the problem confronting them when they proposed to invade England. For Medinia-Sidonia on one side there was Howard himself, one of the heads of a great family, yet a man of authentic action, a man with the faculty of command so that it was said of him, that the English had a fleet of oak with an admiral of osier, strong yet supple and binding all together in one. To men like Recalde, Oquendo, and da Leyva, superb hidalgoes and gallant gentlemen, were opposed Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, men who had made their own way through fair weather and foul. They were symbolic of their time, the yeomen class of England defeating the hereditary grandees of a dying order. Too long had those same grandees left all the arts of life save chivalry to the base-born alien. Those Turkish slaves and French artificers, Greek pilots and Italian and Flemish gunners were the weakness of the Spaniards, to tell the truth. The Pope's Holy Banner floated over a strangly ill-assorted swarm of frightened men that morning of the 26th, as the Armada bore up for Boulogne. And to the northward, on board the *Ark Royal,* an event of much symbolic interest was taking place during this lull in the battle. Lord Howard was holding an investiture in the name of his Queen.

It must have been a remarkable scene, and we are justified in regretting that no person with a turn for description happened to be present. It is an extraordinary feature of the Elizabethan era that with a wealth of literary talent unmatched in half a dozen previous centuries, England had no adequate recorders of the

great events of the time. Men wrote as though inebriated with words. They rioted in what Gabriel Harvey calls "phantastical bibble-babble and capricious pangs." Harvey's diatribe against the tendency of authors to lose themselves in windy verbiage to the neglect of actual happenings is worth reading to-day. Such things as his contemporaries indulge in, he says (in 1593)

> might have been tolerated in a green and wild youth, but the wind is changed and there is a busier pageant upon the stage. M. Aschanis Toxophilus hath long since shot at a fairer mark, and M. Gascoigne himself, after some riper experience, was glad to try other conclusions in the Low Countries, and bestowed an honourable commendation upon Sir Humphrey Gilbert's gallant discourse of a discovery for a new passage to the East Indies. But read the report of the worthy western discoveries by the said Sir Humphrey Gilbert, the report of the brave West Indian voyage by the conduction of Sir Francis Drake; the report of the horrible Septentrional discoveries by the travail of Sir Martin Frobisher; the report of the politic discovery of Virginia by the colony of Sir Walter Raleigh.

And, we may add, with a certain sadness, the report of the miraculous victory achieved by the English fleet, under the discreet and happy conduct of the honourable right prudent and valiant Lord, the Lord Charles Howard, High Admiral of England. The which was not set down by an Englishman at all, but by an industrious gentleman of the Low Countries, in the fifteenth book of his history of the same, and by a well-meaning, if not entirely accurate, Italian gentleman, Messer Petruccio Ubaldino, whose *Discourse Concerning the*

Spanish Fleet Invading England in the Year 1588 was the first Italian book printed in England.

Here was a theme fit for the mightiest pens of England and we have to be content with the scrappy and contradictory letters of men whose language, the speech of the English Bible, was not yet pliable enough to give us a vivid story, whose minds were stiff with doctrine, too, and did not unlimber easily to see what happened right before their eyes. Drake, had Elizabeth ordered him so to do, might have given us an immortal narrative. It is a pity one Master Samuel Pepys, who held office in the Admiralty under Charles II, had not a predecessor, who might have left us his diary of those famous days in July, 1588.

One thing such a supposed eye-witness might have cleared up is the reason why Lord Howard included Roger Townsend, an officer of the Queen's Household, in a list of knights upon such an occasion. With that worthy but obscure gentleman, on that Friday in the Channel, stood Captain John Hawkins, sixty-eight years old, whose life since boyhood had been spent at sea; Captain George Beeston, H. M. S. *Dreadnought,* who had been in command of the Channel Guard while Frobisher was sailing out of London and getting into trouble as a suspected pirate. And last, perhaps because his ship (as usual) was some way of to windward, came in the Admiral's pinnace Martin Frobisher himself, a tall, herculean frame, the bearded face covered with that tracery of fine lines the polar winds engrave, the truculent blue eyes bloodshot and weary with peering through cannon smoke.

It had been a long and strenuous career that now received its accolade. For thirty-five years Martin had sailed the seas. He had been a true adventurer of his day. He had been poor and needy. He had been put to mean shifts and disreputable contrivances when for-

tune failed him. He had married a simple and trusting gentlewoman and left her destitute while he sought in vain for a passage to Cathay. He had waited in anterooms of the court for rewards which never came. He had been called rogue, pirate, and swindler. His enterprises had not always been glorious successes. But now these vicissitudes were forgotten. Doubtless he still had that "fair chain of gold" the Queen had hung about his neck ten years before, and would wear it on such a day as this. He and Hawkins were old acquaintances. It was certainly time that old buccaneer-patriot received recognition of his valor and duty most excellently well done. "Don Juan Achines," as the Spaniards called him, was too notorious a corsair to receive public recognition while his Queen was technically at peace with Spain. Sir Francis, of course, had been knighted aboard the *Golden Hind* for his circumnavigation of the globe. Of his piracy in Chile and Peru Elizabeth would know nothing. "The gentleman would not care if she disowned him." But she could not disown Don Juan Achines.

Frobisher, on the other hand, had never been within sight of knighthood. He happened to have set himself a task for glory which we now know could never have been accomplished. He fell among greedy merchants and had to bear the brunt of their vindictive disappointments. He was, moreover, in spite of his combustible temper and fanatical discipline, "able to take orders." He went with Drake on a notable voyage as second-in-command. His career had been curiously frustrate in some ways. His lack of common-school learning had been against him, for he had none of the arts and accomplishments of the courtier. He could not accept delicate sinecures about the court while he pulled wires to gain his ends. Above all, he was an outsider to the

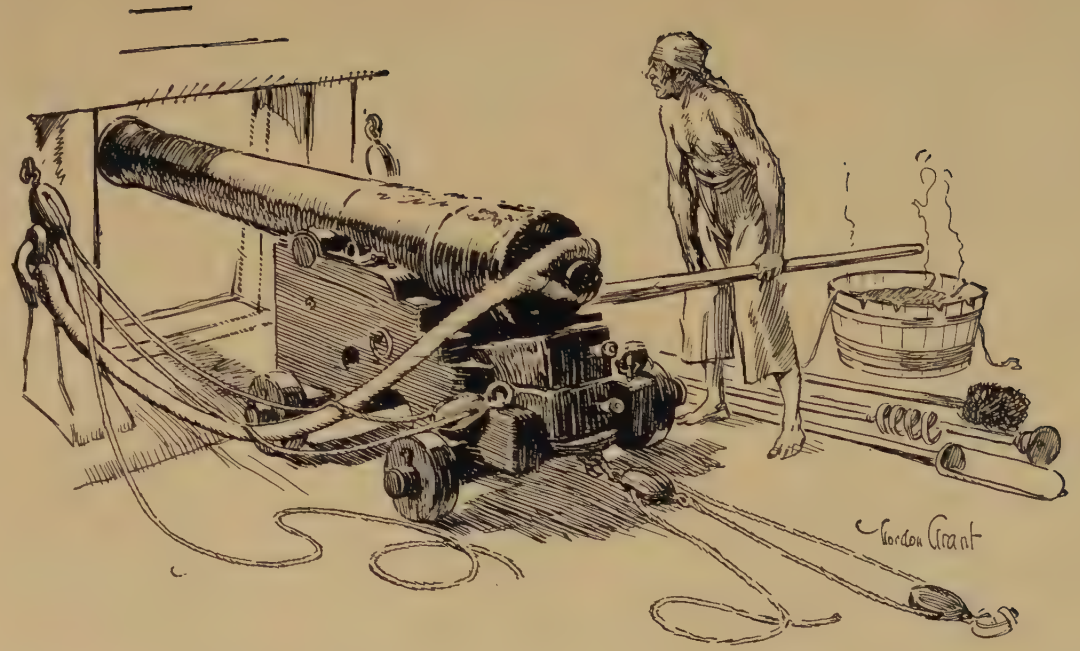
west-countrymen, Raleigh, Drake, Hawkins, Oxenham, Grenville, and Gilbert.

As Sir Martin returned to his flagship, a ship from Havre, passing down-Channel, reported that the Duke of Guise, whose Catholic party had been a source of anxiety to Lord Howard, was remaining neutral. The news was good to the Admiral. He had now no fear of being suddenly confronted with an enemy on his flank. Parma could not use the French ports.

Fugger's letters from Rome and Prague tell us of reports that the Armada had defeated the English. The rumours reached the fleet as it chased through the evening hours after the battered galleons; and we can imagine the word going round the decks, and the vigorous Elizabethan ribaldry booming out of powder-parched throats as the ale-cans were lifted to bearded lips.

But Fugger has more interesting news even than the inevitable false rumours that run round in times of stress. Our old friend at Hamburg tells the tale, dating it August 3rd and 4th:

> Hans Butler [he writes, in obvious excitement], has arrived off the town in a big ship. He comes through the Channel from San Lucar. He was with Captain Drake for four or five days and joined the Englishman on the 21st, O.S. [this, it will be remembered, was the first day of the battle] just after the latter had had an engagement with the Spanish Armada. From the 21st to the 26th they had skirmished and fired heavily at each other, but they could not board, and the English with their little ships sailed so well and manœuvred so skillfully, firing meanwhile, that the galleasses could not get at them. Drake captured Don Pedro de Valdez, admiral of fourteen vessels,



A Naval Thirty-two Pounder, Sixteenth Century, With Tackle and Equipment

and had him and ten other nobles brought on to his own ship. He gave them a banquet and treated them very handsomely and entertained them besides with trumpets and music. . . . All this happened in the presence of the skipper. On the 26th he received a pass but only on condition of carrying a letter to another English port. There 28 Queen's ships were lying. [Probably Dover, where Sir Henry Seymour was getting ready to go out. The letter was Drake's letter to Seymour already quoted.] As soon as their Admiral read the document he got ready for sea to join Drake, but sent two yachts to Holland and Zeeland to tell them to keep a sharp lookout there and prevent the Dunkirk people [Parma's army] from coming out.

This noon there comes from Holland a vessel which was at Enkhuizen actually on the last day of July. It brings news that eighteen ships of the Spanish Armada were sunk by gun-fire, and eight taken and brought to England. The rest of the Spanish Armada has fled to the French Coast. If this is true it will somewhat abate Spanish insolence and give the English fresh courage, though they have no lack of insolence either.

This is exactly what had happened. With regard to the number of ships sunk and captured, we have no means of knowing whether zabraes, pataches and urcas, victualing and auxiliary craft, are included. Hans Butler was evidently an eye-witness. His account is too circumstantial to be the invention of a man who had embroidered some small experience. And the next day our lively Hamburgian lets us have another peep behind the scenes of the Spanish enterprise.

> It is reported that the English Armada has beaten the Spanish and taken twenty-two ships and sunk eighteen by gun-fire. . . . Moreover, the Admiral and Vice-Admiral with two other large ships, each of almost six hundred tons, have been brought in to Zeeland. Two galleasses seem to have been destroyed, the remainder are still at sea.
>
> At Dunkirk a great dispute over the Armada has arisen between the Marquis de Renti, Governor of Hainault and admiral-at-sea, and an Italian Marquis. They quarrelled so furiously that the Italian called Renti a traitor. So they had recourse to their weapons and the Marquis received four bad wounds and the Italian is gravely injured and will hardly escape with his life. The English are pursuing the remains of the Spanish Armada. The Duke of Parma was unable to get out of Dunkirk with his fleet and cut down four or five Captains with his own hand because they would not support him at the right moment. The upshot is . . . the English will do great damage at sea by rapine and theft. God dispose all for the best!

It is obvious that the Hamburg correspondent has no particular love for the English. Only a year before they had suddenly abandoned Hamburg as a port for their goods going to Central Europe and had developed the little freeport of Stade, halfway between that city and the sea, as an alarming competitor. Nevertheless, he is a good reporter and a sound commentator.

Before the galleons lay, as the Middelburg correspondent graphically describes it, "up and down the coast like birds without wings," the belief in Spanish invincibility was gone forever.

CHAPTER XVIII

SIR MARTIN SPEAKS HIS MIND

HERE is a revealing story of Sir Martin's state of mind, after the scattering of the Armada, which is rarely mentioned because of its vagueness and because it reflects upon the reputation of England's greatest seaman. It is not a pleasant story for those amiable folk who delude themselves with the fallacy that the motives of men are pure. It lifts, for a moment, the curtain of tapestried splendours which we call history and shows us the humanity of great commanders.

The trouble arose out of that episode, already described, of Drake's lantern disappearing in the darkness. It is not too much to say that practically every one of Elizabeth's admirals was in a state of financial difficulty during the fight. Those like Howard and Drake, who had money, had spent it on the fleet. We know that the seamen had had no wages in Plymouth, and only Howard's personal pledge held them to their articles. If the Queen did not pay them, he would have to. Frobisher even now was a needy adventurer. There was no shame in this to him. Drake and Hawkins had been the same. Knowing what we do of Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher, of the system of piracy and privateering which Elizabeth had deliberately cultivated to relieve her exchequer of the burden of financing her naval operations, it would be folly to suppose that, on

the arrival of the Armada, patriotic as these men were, they changed their characters. It has become the fashion to believe that when a country enters a great war all combatants are holy and all non-combatants, including politicians, are venal. It has never been true and it certainly was not true in the case of the English navy of 1588. The mere fact that the Spanish galleons carried such quantities of treasure was sufficient to modify the actions of their enemies. In addition to Drake's miraculous discovery of the disabled galleon of Don Pedro Valdez, we have Howard's desertion of his fleet off Calais to stand by the galleasse which had gone ashore on the bar. What these men were out for was to defeat the Armada. But it would be folly to deny that all of them, from Lord Howard of Effingham, bearing one of the greatest titles in England, down to the cooks and scullions on the privateers, were keeping a weather eye for possible loot and prize money. It was part of the adventure of going to sea.

Assuming the common humanity of these men, the story of Frobisher's furious onslaught upon Drake in Harwick Harbour is understandable. Rightly or wrongly, the other captains were nursing a feeling of resentment toward Drake which his truculent temper and dominating personality did nothing to assuage and which was fanned to a bright glow by hearing of how his men had "right merrily" divided the ducats out of Don Pedro's ship among themselves. *That* story fled through the fleet by pinnace and shallop and skiff. It probably animated Howard's men in their attack on the galleasse on Calais Bar. It roused them to madness when the French, as they imagined, were about to rob them of their prey. They knew Drake had kept Don Pedro and his fellow noblemen on board the *Revenge* during the battles that he might collect their

ransom. And when the rival admirals forgathered in the cabin of Lord Sheffield's ship, *Bear* (one thousand tons) in Harwich Harbour after the rout of the Armada, all the animosity which had been kept under for so long flared forth. Every little thing which irked them; every order from Lord Howard, which seemed to confirm their suspicion that he was adopting Drake's suggestions instead of Drake obeying orders; every delay in receiving victuals; every galleon they heard of being cast away on the Dutch coast, "like a bird without wings," safe from their looting; even the exasperating gale which had driven them into Harwich and saved the Armada from total annihilation—all contributed to fanning the flame of their resentment against the fortunate Drake, the incarnate genius of the sea, the Queen's pet, the idol of the west country.

The motive of the conference on the *Bear* was to determine how they were to get a share in the prize money. It seemed a monstrous thing to those men that they, who had hung on to the enemy's flanks, had given him no rest since he had raised Plymouth, should not share in the plunder of the crippled vessels which Drake and Howard had stayed to tear out of them. And what they all felt the fiery forthright Sir Martin, who had never been celebrated for bridling his tongue, bellowed out, his great fist crashing upon the oaken table and making the glasses dance.

It must be remembered, at this juncture, that stores had arrived, and stores would certainly include liquor. The three commanders had been knighted together, which would be a bond. They were all on Lord Howard's inner council of war, which was another bond. Yet how had they been treated? It was Drake to whom Howard turned. Everywhere it was Drake. They would be drinking as they discussed this hideous griev-

ance. And what they wanted to do to Drake was probably enlarged upon as they downed their grog. It would be easy for them to attribute to Drake Lord Howard's orders to Seymour to get back to the Channel Guard in case Parma came out. We know Seymour took that order very hard. By it he was deprived of doing his bit to the Spaniards in open fight. Meanwhile, how were they to get their share of the Spanish money? They "had stayed not to take the spoil." Drake's men had divided fifty-five thousand ducats out of Don Pedro's ship. Frobisher was biting on that, as we say.

But whatever the discontent among them, it only came to a sinister head when a certain Mathew Starke came aboard with a message from the Lord Admiral to Lord Sheffield. What the immediate provocation may have been we cannot be sure. But the whisper went round the table that Starke was one of Drake's men. Perhaps he was dressed in some of the Spanish loot, velvets and satins with a pair of Cordovan leather boots to his thighs and a jeweled buckle on his belt. Perhaps his manner, as one of the men of the celebrated Drake, got on their nerves. Perhaps he was quick and saucy when these new knights (nobodies to him, we may be sure) engaged him in talk. Drake's men swore by him. He had the gift of making men brag about him. He captured their imaginations. Small men—like Starke—became great in their own eyes through association with him, very much as a sailor from a huge battleship will patronise another from a guardship. It is possible Master Starke failed to disguise his pleasant position as a participator in the loot of the *San Luis*. It is even possible he permitted some words of Drake's about his colleagues to fall like a lighted linstock upon the packed combustible fury of Sir Martin's tormented

mind. The huge bulk of the admiral rose up above the glasses on the cabin table.

"Sir Francis Drake reporteth that no man hath done any good service but he," he burst out to his fellow commanders. "He shall well understand others have done as good service as he, and better, too!"

Mathew Starke, smiling and insolent, while Lord Sheffield read the dispatch, took the opportunity to make some laudatory comments upon Sir Francis. But Sir Martin was not to be stayed now. He had his own opinion of Drake. It came out with a rush.

"He came bragging up at the first indeed, and gave them his prow and his broadside, and then kept his luff and was glad he was gone again like a cowardly knave or a traitor—I rest doubtful which, but one I will swear."

Master Starke here interposed by saying with a quiet smile, that his captain had done good service.

"Aye, he did good service indeed," roared Frobisher. "He took Don Pedro, for after he had seen her in the evening that she had spent her masts, like a coward he kept by her all night because he would have the spoil. He thinketh to cozen us of our shares of fifteen thousand ducats, but we will have our shares, or I will make him spend the best blood in his belly. He hath done enough of these cozening cheats already."

Remember, across the table sat that grizzled old veteran of the Spanish main, Sir John Hawkins, *Don Juan Achines*. Next him was Edmund Lord Sheffield, curiously enough to our modern notions, knighted although he had a hereditary title. Sheffield was a Yorkshireman, and was later Lord President of the Council of the North. He probably understood Frobisher better than any of them and shared his distrust of swashbuckling west-countrymen like Grenville and the Drakes.

These two men listened to their indignant companion. Mathew Starke must have made some casual allusion here which deflected Sir Martin's attention to himself.

"He [Drake] hath used certain speeches of me which I will make him eat again, or I will make him spend the best blood in his belly."

Master Starke had now something to say of the *San Luis* which Frobisher could not stomach. Accident! Fortune! Had not the *Revenge* seen the disabled galleon overnight?

No, said Master Starke, softly, smiling at the others, they had not.

"You lie!" bellowed Frobisher. "She was seen of all the fleet."

Mathew Starke explained that only in the morning did they discover Don Pedro, two or three cables' lengths from them.

"Aye . . . you were within two or three cables' lengths," agreed Sir Martin, sarcastically. "You were no further off all night. You lay ahull of her."

So they argued, Sir Martin losing his temper and his sense of proportion, his grievance against Drake blotting out his own duty to his position. It seems likely, however, that the other captains had something to say, too, but Master Starke suppressed it in his declaration. Lord Sheffield asked him who he was. He said he had been in the battle on the *Revenge*.

"But what art thou—a soldier?" demanded the commander, suspiciously. Starke seemed more of a hanger-on, a camp-follower, a sea-lawyer, than a regular naval man.

"I am a mariner, like your honour," was the impudent reply. His lordship closed the interview abruptly. He said, coldly:

"I have no more to say to you. You may depart."

And depart the fellow did, reporting to the *Revenge* his own version of what had happened. Drake, as a matter of protection to himself, ordered him to set it all out and have it attested, because others besides Hawkins and Frobisher were beginning to sing out lustily for a share in the loot.

Sooner or later, all such noises reached the ears of the Queen. It was an extraordinary feature of her extraordinary character that she could hear the jingle of Spanish money much more clearly than the groans of dying English seamen. While she drove her admirals to drink and madness by her viperish questioning of every item on their bill of charges, while seamen were dying in the streets of Margate, laid out in rows because there was no roof to shelter them, she did not care. Her short rations and sour beer had got in their work. The men who had defended her throne and realm with their bodies were rotting with dysentery, dying like flies, while she was laughing herself sick over the antics of a new buffoon, one Tarlton, at court.

And no sooner had she heard of this money her admirals were claiming—the only detail of the Armada battles she seems to have been interested in—she took charge and ordered the High Admiral to give an accounting. Even Lord Howard, who had pledged his entire private fortune to equip the fleet, was concerned. He had taken some ducats. He must restore them instantly. Hawkins was in such a financial maze over his professional audits and private disbursements he was like to go crazy with the accounts. Howard was practically accused of peculation. He admits he had used three thousand pistoles of Don Pedro's treasure.

> I did take them, as I told you I would; for by Jesus, I had not three pounds left in the world, and have not anything could get money in London—

> my plate was gone before. But I will repay it within ten days after my coming home. I pray you let her majesty know so, and by the Lord God of heaven I had not one crown more, and had it not been mere necessity I would not have touched one; but if I had not some to have bestowed upon some poor miserable men I should have wished myself out of the world.

So wrote, almost with tears at the incredible lack of understanding on the part of his sovereign, the Lord High Admiral of the fleet which had saved Elizabeth's throne. He wrote it to Walsyngham, who, of all the ministers about the Queen, alone comprehended what the seamen were doing. Walsyngham alone was a whole-souled believer in "the Idolatry of Neptune" as the land soldiers called the new rage for naval aggression. Corbett speaks of the Queen's "ignorance of the most elementary conditions of naval strategy." What is far more astonishing is her ignorance of the most elementary principles of human conduct. It was apparently impossible for her to believe that any Englishman could hold a position in her service without falling away into a morass of petty thievery and dirty double-dealing. She treated her Lord High Admiral as though he were a sneak-thief errand-boy who had run off with some shillings out of the till. How could anyone expect to move her by describing the poor seamen dying of dysentery after fighting like lions for her throne?

What became of the actual treasure on Don Pedro's and de Moncada's ships we can only surmise. Probably it was turned into the Queen's Treasury and grants issued against it. Sir Martin received his grant in due course, while he was preparing to hoist his flag in command of the Channel Squadron, while Philip of Spain was sending plaintive messages to a flinty-hearted pon-

tiff to assist him in his utter disaster, while the Duke of Guise was being murdered by his King in his Château at Blois. Sir John Hawkins handed Sir Martin a great warrant for 4,979 pounds on account "of the war of July 21, 1588."

CHAPTER XIX

SIR MARTIN WRITES SOME LETTERS

HEN Sir Martin Frobisher, Kt., arrived once more in the West Riding of Yorkshire and appeared in his native village of Altofts the general impression among the inhabitants of that rural hamlet was that he had been a corsair, that he had discovered the Northwest Passage to the Indies, had discovered the gold mines worked by King Solomon, and finally had beaten the Spanish Armada more or less singlehanded. Altofts was right out of the world. It lay in the trough of that vast sweep of land, like the hollow between two enormous waves, which forms the West Riding. It had been one of the most peaceful parts of England since the Wars of the Roses. Sir Martin found it very pleasant to spend a few weeks of leisure at home in the country, with money in his strong box and a promise of fresh work to come. He looked about him for a house. He was a widower of fifty, a successful celebrated man. He had not far to look for a wife in suitable circumstances.

It would be idle, however, to put forward Sir Martin as an ideal husband save in the sense that he was always away. He had been to sea since a lad. He had no education in the formal manner of the day. His interest naturally was centred exclusively upon his pro-

fession. It was centred upon his profession to the day of his death.

The work which soon devolved upon him was to watch the Narrow Seas. Although the Queen, when she heard that the Armada had been scattered in the North Sea, assumed that all danger was over, her admirals and Council had striven to endow her with some comprehension of the actual situation. Trade was beginning to move again, but so might Parma move. The fact was, nobody had any information as to Parma's condition or designs. Drake was at court, arguing an expedition to destroy Spanish naval power in the Atlantic and capture the Azores for the indomitable Don Antonio, Prior of Crato and survivor of the battle of Terceira. And Frobisher, who did not get on overwell with any of the west-country admirals, was glad to hoist his flag on H. M. S. *Tiger* and sail up and down the Flemish coast, capturing the Easterling flyboats and cromsters laden with wheat for Spain and taking them into London River to feed the starving navy men. It was Frobisher's fixed conviction that a blockade should be complete or it was useless. The theory of the Dutch merchants in this war between Spain and England was that they themselves had the right as neutrals to carry cargo for Spanish merchants. For this purpose they obtained Spanish passes from Parma. At times, as we have seen, they secured English passes from Flushing, and Frobisher wrote, with irresistible logic, that he ought to have some mark by which he could know whom to pass and whom to stay, for the Dutch authorities were issuing the passes in blank. Now the seizure of grain ships by the *Tiger* was taken up by the Company of Almaine in London. These foreign merchants had the monopoly of importing grain into England. The English farmers regarded them with no particular affection. Frobisher probably absorbed the farmer's

view at Altofts. The Company of Almaine petitioned the Council against the seizures. It ruined their credit abroad and their trade with the navy at home. Frobisher, however, continued to seize every ship he could overhaul. And while a judge in the Admiralty Court, with the curious name of Julius Cæsar, was being bombarded with complaints against the *Tiger,* she was augmented by two more Queen's ships, *Vanguard* and *Tramontame,* and three pinnaces, *Moon, Charles,* and *Spy.* On November 26, 1588, while the remnants of the Armada were crawling across the Bay of Biscay in agony and shame, Sir Martin's squadron took up station in the Channel in obedience to a warrant from the Queen. They were "to remain in the Narrow Seas in warlike manner under our trusty and well-beloved Sir Martin Frobisher, Knight, for our especial service."

There are extant, in connection with this "especial service," some letters in Frobisher's own hand which reveal both his qualities and his defects as an executive. An example of his epistolary style has already been given. We are justified in assuming that Frobisher was "a poor correspondent." But in 1589, while at sea, he wrote no less than three letters in four days, an unprecedented feat. It must have taken as long to decipher them as it took Sir Martin to write them. They record with stark simplicity his actions and opinions. In the first he reports that his pinnace *Moon* (sixty tons) had captured "a Lounedragare." This curious word is apparently Frobisher's way of spelling "l'homme de guerre," which was the common phrase for "man-of-war." There was a Spaniard in her bound for Dunkirk, and the admiral reports that this person flung overboard "tou paketes of Letares" and these two packets of letters Frobisher intends to examine and send on as soon as he can, but he has had letters from the Lord Treasurer which require immediate attention. This

brief note is sent from the Downs, "thes 6 of Maye at 8 a cloke at neyhte, 1589.

Your honares moste
honbleye
Martin Frobiser."

There is a quaint postscript to this letter which indicates the haste with which Frobisher indited it. It runs:

"Shee is Ladened wt ches & nate elles your honar shalle knowe as sone as I can undare stande it."

This went to Lord Howard, and that much-bothered commander would doubtless be glad to know that the captured man-o'-war was "laden with cheese and naught else," though her name Sir Martin had omitted in his haste to include in his information.

Next day, having examined his capture at more leisure, Sir Martin reports again. We have an echo of the Armada. And the "Loundragare" turns out to be only a hoy, after all.

MY HONNORABLE GOOD L.

I have sent your honnor the pase [passport] of this hoye hearin closed [here enclosed] and with all a Letare wher in your honnor may se [see] all her Ladinge that she was secritly bound for Dunkert with this Don John De Teledo [De Toledo]. The marchant that is onnor [owner] of these goodes ys called Hanse Vandeveck dwellinge in hanserdam [Amsterdam].

I have also examined this Spaniard he confesses as I advertised your honnor that he was taken with Don Deage de pemmentelo. [Don Diego de Pi-

mentel, the hero of the San Mateo at Gravelines] and that this marchant Hanse Vandeveck did get him Relesed for a mariner of Rotterdam that was presoner in Donkert [Dunkirk]. I have also sent your honnor his pasport wherein you maye se his name and the form of his Deliverie.

There is in her three pore men ther wifes and children bound for honscot. I have sent the hoy into Dover peare [pier], & I have commanded the pore men and the women & childern a land in Dover to go wher thay will. The hoy the skipper and the Spaniard I kep in safe custodie tell I knew your honnors plesur hearin.

When the skipper did se he wase to be taken he willed them all to cast overbord the leters but they swore all they wher [were] but one pore kinsmans to another of commendacions & of ther parince [parents?].

I pray your honnors Deriction for these causes and what I shall doe for the mendinge of my maste and shiftinge of my balis [ballast] which must be donne before I take in any vitels [victuals]. I have but VII dayes vitels left and it plese your honnor the vitels might go to harwige [Harwich] that comes Doune and the ship maye met ther vitels ther and Dispach all thinges in thre or fower dayes. Thus comiting your honnor to the almitie [almighty] Downes this VIIth of May 1589.

Your honnors must humbely bound

MARTIN FROBISER.

The next letter, which comprises about a thousand words of extremely involved syntax, is important and is here translated into modern English. It was written from the Downs like the others, and it is a reply to some query from the Lord Treasurer concerning

the wisdom of abandoning Ostende, or, as Frobisher spells, it "ostedynde." That gay pleasure resort of recent years was in those days a fortification rescued from the surrounding marshes by dykes and ditches. Sir John Conway was holding it for the English. The Queen's policy of retrenchment—the only policy she ever had which the ordinary subject could perceive—favoured its abandonment. Cecil would like Sir Martin's views.

Sir Martin had very strong views on this subject. It may be true that Frobisher, as Sir Julian Corbett says, had no aptitude for naval strategy, that Drake was a misunderstood genius at this time. But this letter seems to indicate that Frobisher, in spite of his terrifying spelling and lack of academical education, was thoroughly acquainted with his business of defending the Narrow Seas. He speaks here as a soldier as well as a naval man. His view is that it would be in the highest degree unwise to let the Prince of Parma ("the preynes of parma") occupy it. Here is his letter, stripped of the bewildering garments in which he clothes his thought:

> I have sent your honour's letter of the 8th this afternoon to Sir John Conway, which would be returned with all the speed that may be, in which I see how honourably you have considered every point—what the danger be to leave it [Ostende] to the enemy and what good the enemy may gain by easing of his garrison, which he is now forced to keep there upon the frontiers of those waste countries, besides the recovering of a rich country now lying waste, and as it is now very troublesome to the enemy. But for that I will not show myself undutiful in disobeying of your honour's command-

ments I durst not have ventured to have set down my opinion in a case of so great importance.

Considering the charge the enemy is at with sundry garrisons to keep the frontiers of these waste countries, to preserve those countries within, if he shall have them at liberty besides the wealth and trade that will grow to the enemy by it.

For if we should give it over this summer we cannot so much ruinate or drown it, but that they will recover it before winter and make it within one year a better harbour than Dunkirk, for it hath had five times as many ships belonging to it as ever Dunkirk had. It would be a far worse neighbour than Dunkirk for it doth stand so directly in the way that all ships must perforce fall within sight of it to go into Flushing. If it be let go to the enemy, there can nothing pass from Flushing nor to Flushing without great convoy, and then have they all that coast clear for all their men of war. All the coast would be a harbour to them, for that it is sand, and when they lest not fight they may put their ships ashore on a fair sand, and the country being friendly who can offend them? That country betwixt Nieuport and Blankenberg being theirs, as it is not as long as we keep Ostende. For now they dare not stay there for fear of being put ashore into our men's hands that may range all that coast alongst upon such an occasion.

If the States refuse it, they will be at greater charges with maintaining of ships to waste than the town will cost to be kept, for they will lose more in one year than will defend it if it should be besieged.

I think it now a time most unfit to give it over to the enemy, for this summer they will repair it

to serve their turn that the next winter will leave out of danger of the seas in it. Yet if it be but kept till winter then upon some storm it may be left most under water and lying all winter under water it will cost them two or three years' travail before they recover it. Besides some harm it will do of many things, that the enemy hath yet free, will be drowned, likewise if the winter weather were come so as the great charge and their poverty will make some stop to it.

Besides this, your honour is acquainted with the troubles of France [trobbelles of franes] what danger it might be if the Prince of Parma [preynes of parma] had this country clear and no landing place [no landinge plase] for Her Majesty's forces, he may be the bolder to assist those of the League. But as long as Her Majesty or the States hath this town [Ostende] he will be loath to put any great forces into France for fear Her Majesty shall put any forces aland there to dispossess him of all the ports by the seas and as Bruges and Sluys [briges and slewse] Nieuport and Dunkirk, which were more danger to them than they can get benefit in France.

For of all evils now Her Majesty must take the best and hold them to it from home, for she seeth all their pretense is against her highness, whom God hath and I hope will preserve against all her enemies. There is a matter of small charge in respect of that they mean towards her. This is a shrewd block in their way, and keeps them from sundry purposes, and keeps them in fear both by sea and land more than every one conceives of it.

I see they take all opportunities by sword or poison (?) and now seeing Her Majesty is so far

in with them she must do the like for a time, for this summer will give some light on what is best to be done. Your honor shall hear of Don Antonio's . . . and what will pass in France, and if Her Majesty should now give this enemy any encouragement it would encourage those in Spain against our fleet, for they will take a great courage upon a small victory. So if any reasonable charge will do it, rather than it should be parted with all without blows and be for his trouble some time were grown to some better certainty. There is a great sort of her good subjects [sobgekes] whereof I would make one myself to venture both my life and that little I have to keep it for a time with the help of God against them. My simple opinion is, it were better to hold it till winter with the venture of losing it by being besieged considering this time for if there be any reasonable company of men in it they will pay so dear for it as there will be no dishonour to our country in the loss of it. I understand by sundry reports out of Flanders that the Prince will not waste his men in besieging of any town. And so I hear out of Spain that they have a further pretence, but I hope God will prevent them.

Thus most humbly praying pardon if I have gone beyond my duty, and think it is of most bounden duty to Her Majesty and realm, for whom I hope God will give me grace to lay my life for in any service to defend her. Thus much I have set down as far as my simple reason leads me, leaving it and myself to your most honourable and wise consideration, with my humble prayer to the Almighty God for her long and prosperous reign over us and your long life and health many years

to continue her honourable counsellor, which is to all our good.

The Downs, this 9 of May, 1589.
Your honour's most humbly bound
MARTIN FROBISER.

This entirely sound advice was acted upon. Ostend was held. Three hundred and twenty six years later the advice would still have been good; but it was not possible in 1914 to hold "the cautionary town."

It is obvious, from the above correspondence, that Frobisher was regarded at home as something more than a reckless fighter and a skillful navigator. But the struggle to discover what he had written on those large quarto sheets, as the *Vanguard* rolled in the Downs, must have caused the Lord Treasurer to drop a hint. Thenceforward he seems to have employed a clerk.

CHAPTER XX

HE SAILS "TO THE WESTWARD"

IT WAS in the spring of 1569, while Sir Martin was painfully elucidating his views concerning the Low Countries, that Sir Francis, with a force of twenty thousand men, was attacking Corunna. The plan of the Queen's government, of which the author was Sir Francis, was to destroy the Spanish naval forces, land Don Antonio of Portugal at Lisbon and support him in establishing himself upon his long-vacant throne. It had been vacant too long, however, for on endeavouring to raise the country in his favour Don Antonio failed to discover any of his supporters. The expedition, grandly conceived and poorly executed, while it damaged the Spanish arms, was a miserable failure. Drake himself arrived in Plymouth at the end of June, with the *Revenge* in a sinking condition and his own reputation seriously damaged at court.

Frobisher meanwhile was appointed to a squadron of three ships, *Lion, Elizabeth Bonaventure,* and *Repentance,* and two pinnaces, *Sun* and *Advice,* to cruise "to the westward." It is worth noting that the *Advice* was commanded by "Young Martin Frobisher," a nephew of the Admiral and his first heir. Frobisher never had any children of his own. The warrant called for "certain special service in the South and West" and had in view the capture of the plate fleets in the vicinity of the Azores. The Earl of Cumberland was al-

ready out with a fleet—one of the most successful privateersmen of his day. But Frobisher, before sailing westward, cruised as far as Cape St. Vincent, and, weathering that familiar landmark, put into a small harbour under its lee and sheltered from the Atlantic rollers. Here he discovered a large Biscayan galleon at anchor under the guns of the castle of Sagres, and at once attempted to cut her out. He was successful, but so hot had been the fire from ship and castle that the *Repentance,* owned by Sir John Hawkins, had her masts and sails shot to pieces.

It was imperative that, raiding with so small a squadron midway between Cadiz and Lisbon, in the fairway for warships coming from the West Indies, Frobisher should make off at once. So far as we can gather, the object of the expedition was to raid, to harass, and to spoil. Frobisher's total muster was six hundred men in five vessels, the largest only five hundred and fifty tons.

It is customary to speak contemptuously of this raiding voyage of the Admiral, but the destruction of the Spanish Armada and the incessant raids upon the plate fleets had brought forward new protective schemes and a new and ingenious type of vessel. It was a treasure ship. The inventor, Don Pedro Menendez Marquez, in charge of the dockyard at Havana, called them galliazabras. They were the forerunners of the eighteenth-century frigates. They were swift war vessels of reasonable tonnage, into whose bullion-chambers the treasure was transshipped in the Indies. They brought it as far as the Azores, where the Indian Guard squadron met them and escorted them home. Moreover, the Spanish ships were in constant communication with Spain and with one another by means of fast dispatch pinnaces, who carried the latest news of English vessels and deflected the galleons from their intended courses.

The occasional rich hauls which were secured by the English raiders from 1589 onward, were largely due to accidental miscarriages of the Spanish plans. They were not the fruit of English genius and audacity.

Cumberland, in the Azores, arrived just as a fleet of galliazabras from the Indies had anchored in the strong haven of Angra. There they would have remained until the arrival of the Indian Guard, but upon Cumberland sailing home disappointed because he was short of victuals, the plate fleet came out and, setting a course for St. Vincent, fell in with Frobisher.

The details of this engagement have not been preserved. It is said that the ships of the Spanish Admiral and Vice-Admiral were struck and the treasure ships escaped. Sir Martin sailed for Plymouth with his three prizes. He, too, was short of victuals. One of the prizes sank near the Eddystone, a scant dozen miles from Plymouth. The plunder of this voyage was valued at fifteen thousand pounds, and we gain a sudden and illuminating glimpse into naval affairs of those days. Sir John Hawkins, veteran Admiral, complaining Treasurer of the Navy, who had contributed the *Repentance* (200 tons) to the expedition, put in a requisition for extra damage to his ship in addition to his regular dividend. Her ground-tackle was all "wasted and worn"—a very improbable story after a three months' cruise, "her sails and cordage all spoiled, her masts shot through"—a likely enough state of affairs when a ship had been in action. The slippery old gentleman made his appeal in vain. Evidently a survey was held on the vessels when they docked. Howard, Frobisher, Palmer, and Boroughs signed a report. The total tonnage of the fleet had been fourteen hundred tons. The *Repentance* was two hundred tons—one seventh of the whole. The prize goods being valued

at fifteen thousand pounds and one third of it being allotted to the shipowners, Sir John's share was a seventh of five thousand—seven hundred and fourteen pounds, five shillings and no more. It probably represented an annual dividend on his invested capital of about two hundred per cent, and he mournfully capitulated. Frobisher knew all about prize-money. He could never get enough of it. And it would have been difficult for anybody to have pulled the wool over his eyes in an argument about shares. Going to sea in the sixteenth century carried with it the risk and the rewards of modern stock-gambling. Men pooled their resources and went out to loot the plate fleet instead of the public. If the plate fleet escaped or fought them and sank a few ships, the venture was a loss and some other adventurers took a chance. At the time of Frobisher's service in 1589-90 the Atlantic and West Indian waters were alive with cool and audacious English freebooters. Vast fortunes were being accumulated by daring merchant-adventurers who cared nothing for the rights or wrongs of Philip and Elizabeth. They boarded and captured rich galleons under the very guns of the Morro Castle at Havana.

A burnt fragment of a letter in the Cottonian Mss. shows how keen was the competition among the admirals for court favour. When Frobisher returned from his raid on the Azores, Drake was in disgrace over the Lisbon voyage. He cleared himself before the Council, but the general view was that the Queen had lost confidence in his sagacity. Frobisher rose in favour as Drake receded. Once again he was requested to give his views on the burning question of the times—how best to cripple the naval power of Spain? The letter referred to is mutilated and illegible, but Frobisher's advice is clear:

So that my opinion is there may be no less than eight g . . . [probably galleons or great ships] of the Queen's Majesty's and twelve good merchants, and all the men of war that may be gotten to accompany them. . . .

If it please her Majesty but to put into her fleet . . . victuals more than will serve her fleet to go to Capo . . . they may go to Havana and meet them on their wafture . . . come to them.

For there is no doubt but if Her Majesty's fleet go for the coast of Spain first they shall get intelligence which way to wor . . . to encounter them.

The sense of this document is that in Frobisher's view the plate fleets might not come home this year (1590). Therefore the English ships must be victualed to stay out upon station to catch it when it did come home. This is sound sense. English ships were always going to sea short of victuals, including water.

But Frobisher was an optimist if he imagined good Queen Bess letting a fleet go out with enough to eat for nine months on board. Starvation was apparently confused in Elizabeth's mind with loyalty. If they had enough to eat they would not come home. She believed, perhaps, that an army travels upon its belly, but it was an empty belly for the seamen unless they captured Spanish stores.

Except in this matter of stores Frobisher's ideas were even improved upon, and this must be considered. Her Majesty issued a warrant for the following Queen's ships to be equipped and victualled for four months' cruising:

Revenge	250 men	Sir Martin Frobisher
Mary Rose	250 "	Sir John Hawkins
Lion	250 "	Sir Edward Yorke

Bonaventure	250	men	Captain Fenner
Rainbow	250	"	Sir George Beeston
Hope	250	"	Captain Bostock
Nonpareil	250	"	
Dreadnought	200	"	Captain Martin Frobisher, Jr.
Swiftsure	180	"	
Foresight	160	"	
Quittance	100	"	Captain Richard Hawkins
Crane	100	"	
Moon	40	"	
Merlin	40	"	
	2,570	"	

It will be seen that Frobisher was given the flagship of the disgraced Drake, the ship which was to win immortal fame when Sir Richard Grenville fought, single-handed, four squadrons of Spanish galleons off Flores. She was a vessel of four hundred and forty tons, ninety-two feet in length and thirty-two in beam, with a molded depth of fifteen feet. She was so small in comparison with the modern ships then building that the fifteen-hundred-ton *San Felipe,* a three-decker, kept her helpless merely by sailing up aweather of her and so becalming her.

It is not to be supposed that Frobisher had anything to do with these dispositions. Drake was gone home to Plymouth under a cloud. It was Sir Martin's turn to serve the Queen as Admiral. They sailed in May, 1590. And in September of the same year they returned with nothing more spectacular than a few Dutch ships bound for Spain which caused more legal trouble than they were worth.

The expedition had been a failure. It is customary to dismiss it with a shrug, blaming the Queen for relieving Drake from active service and intrusting an im-

portant commission to Hawkins, who was too old, and Frobisher, who was too incompetent. Before going on to discuss the alleged corruption among the commanders of the voyage, it will be worth while to consider whether, had Drake been appointed, he would have enjoyed any better fortune.

It may be stated in the first place that the government permitted, either by negligence or corruption, full information concerning the enterprise to reach Spain, with the result that a powerful fleet was waiting in the Azores. In the second place, Spain had been recovering to some extent from the débâcle of the Armada. Elderly aristocrats had been dropped and admirals with experience of foreign-station work appointed. New ships had been built embodying some of the qualities of the Elizabethan men-of-war. The ports in the Indies and the Western Islands had been strengthened in every way, as Drake found to his dreary astonishment on his last voyage. And finally the Queen and her Council had ignored the very fulcrim of Sir Martin's argument. He saw, as his letter proves, that the King of Spain might order the plate fleets, even at heavy loss to the country, to winter in the Indies. This is precisely what Philip did order. The plate fleet remained in Havana and Frobisher, with only four months' provisions, had to come home. His voyage had damaged Philip, but it had been expensive to Elizabeth and the adventurers without any compensating plunder. And, granting willingly that Frobisher had not the transcendent naval genius of Drake, that Sir John Hawkins was getting old and had lost his zest for piratical adventure, wherein lies the utility of suggesting that if only Drake had been there things would have gone well?

We now come to the tale told in the histories, that Frobisher, arriving before Fayal in the Azores (known

to sailors since the days of Henry as the Western Islands), sent a trumpeter ashore to ask the governor for water, and on the said trumpeter being killed, sailed away without firing a shot. The story, to say the least, is unlikely. It comes through Lindschoten, a Hollander who got it from the inhabitants of Fayal. Frobisher had with him twelve privateers, well armed, six ships of the royal navy, and two naval pinnaces. He and his men were on the jump for loot. Sir John, the veteran of a score of episodes of cool valour and consummate audacity, the very pattern of the old traders who blazed the trails of our modern world, was not the man to leave unrecorded so astonishing an act of cowardice and poltroonery. If Frobisher had committed this act he should have been court-martialed and dismissed from the service. He would have been court-martialed, without doubt, as was Drake on his return from the Lisbon fiasco. Instead of which we read that in 1592, having been examined as to peculation charges and allowed to go home to Yorkshire on leave, he is at court again, and while Drake is once more in favour, "carrying it away from them all," as Birch's *Memoirs* has it, yet "Sir Martin is in reasonable good favour." We are justified in supposing that the story the Dutchman got from the frightened people of Fayal was a garbled version of some easily explained incident, and it has been accepted by one historian after another because it was nobody's business to discredit it. Frobisher had been seizing Dutch ships loaded with Spanish cargo right and left as lawful contraband of war. Any tale told about him strained through a Dutchman's prejudiced mind would need a grain of salt.

We now come to the charges of peculation, and for that matter incompetence, bribery, corruption, nepotism, procrastination, and inciting to mutiny. A gentleman named Thomas Davis, either a self-appointed sea-law-

yer or assigned to the office of private detective by the Council, had accompanied the fleet. On arriving home he had presented such a catalogue of abuses, discreetly refraining from naming the guilty officers, that if Elizabeth had taken the charges seriously she would have clapped the whole staff into the Tower. In the absence of any reports to that effect we may consider the charges not proven. The Admiralty concerned itself with an inquiry into the conduct of the fleet officers. Sir Henry Palmer, Admiral Borough, and Master Gonson, son of Henry the Eighth's Treasurer of the Navy, examined the charges, not of Davis, but of the Hollander merchants whose ships had been seized. Their report comes to us briefly as follows:

> Sir Martin Frobisher doth acknowledge that he received outwards bound of Arnold Johnson, a Fleming, 862 pieces of silver of four shillings the piece which amounts to the sum of £172. 8.0.
>
> Young Martin Frobisher, Captain of the Dreadnought, doth confess that he and the Captains that arrived at Plymouth with him homewards bound the 29th of September, 1590 did receive there (we know not of whom but suppose it was by them taken out of those fly boats stayed at the seas and brought into Plymouth by the Dreadnought) the sum of £1154.2.0 which was distributed amongst the said captains as followeth:

	£	s.	d.
Sir George Beeston, Vice Admiral in the "Lion"	306	2	0
Edward York, the "Bonaventura"	431	0	0
Young Martin Frobisher	287	0	0
John Bostock, the "Crane"	130	0	0
	£1,154	2	0

> The sum of all the money which Sir Martin Frobisher and the Captains under his charge do confess that they have received from Netherlanders both outwards bound, homewards bound and since they came hence, doth amount to the sum of £1,326 10 0 for which sum they have given up their several accounts to the officers of the navy, wherein it appeareth they have disbursed the same with surplusage for the use of Her Majesty's ships under their especial charges in wages for their companies to bring the ships to Chatham, for which surplusage they are to be allowed out of the office of the Admiralty.

"Disbursed the same, with a surplusage." If this report means anything it is that the Admiralty had kept the fleet short of money, that the admirals had recouped themselves from their prizes, had paid their men, and it was now the Admiralty's concern to reimburse the plundered Dutchmen. It is easy to say that Frobisher and Hawkins would have plundered Dutchmen, anyway. We know of no Elizabethan adventurer who was squeamish when it came to a prize, what Drake called "a little comfortable dew from heaven." The point is that the charges of peculation, like those of cowardice in the face of the enemy at Fayal, are largely noisy hearsay calumnies which were evidently dismissed as such by contemporary authority. The reader will presently peruse a letter written by the Queen to Sir Martin just three years later, and may judge whether that sharp and peremptory appraiser of man would write in such wise to a coward and a peculator. But it seems difficult for those whose eyes have been dazzled by the personality and prestige of Drake to render common justice to his lesser contemporaries.

CHAPTER XXI

SIR MARTIN TAKES A WIFE, AND GOES ON HIS LAST VOYAGE

IN THE summer of 1591, being at that time fifty two or three years old, and having spent forty of those years at sea, Sir Martin took horse and rode down into Yorkshire with his nephew and heir, young Martin, to enjoy a little well-earned leisure. He had plenty of money, for almost the first time in his life. He was "in reasonable good favour" at court, which in a changing and censorious world is good enough. And he had the *entrée* of all the best people in that far riding where he was born. It was natural enough for a man in such circumstances to get married. For the second time Martin married a wealthy widow. And "Young Martin," who seems to have been a pretty smart lad either at looting a galleon or getting a wife, married the widow's daughter. Dame Dorothy Widmerpoole was the widow of Sir William Widmerpoole, and the daughter of Lord Wentworth, whose descendant in the next century became famous and infamous as Earl of Strafford. Her children were grown up, and it is probable that her dowry had been ample. We have seen at the outset of this history that the Frobishers possessed "the art of marrying well." It is here exemplified with striking force. Young Martin seemed to have the family faculty.

In November of the same year Sir Martin acquired

from the Queen, through his friend Sir John Savile, another Yorkshireman, who was employed in the Exchequer, the Manor of Whitwood, close to Altofts. He also purchased the Grange of Finningly in Nottinghamshire, the two estates costing him £948. 17. 3½d. Finningly was part of the priory of Mattersea, recently suppressed and sequestrated by the crown. It might almost be called Yorkshire, so close is it to the county line. Sir Martin himself began to build a house at Whitwood, while young Martin married and settled at Finningly, and a son was born to him and his Mistress Widmerpoole (or Wimpole) the following year. The two estates were only fifteen or twenty miles apart and Altofts, the family home, was adjacent to Whitwood. Frobisher, like Shakespeare some years later, went down to his native place and purchased a home there. His nephew, Young Martin, died the year following his marriage. Will Shakespeare, a young man also in his twenty-fifth year, was working at odd jobs around the playhouse stage, and listening in taverns to seamen who knew all about the *Revenge* and the Dutchmen at Fayal. Indeed it is quite possible that he saw Sir Martin, then "in reasonable good favour" with Her Majesty, when that successful Admiral passed an evening at the play. In their several ways they were typical of their era. They were both of the getting-ahead type. They were also, strangely enough, to leave equally scanty memorials of their private lives. And neither of them founded an enduring line. They were, in the phrase of an American poet, "timeless Englishmen."

All too soon, however, Sir Martin's retirement came to an end. He can scarcely have completed the manor-house he was building when word came to hold himself ready to take command. He seems to have reached London some time in May, 1592.

Things had not been going well with the navy. The

fact was, the English were unable to understand that Spain was straining every nerve and sinew to repair the defects of her naval policy. The Casa de Contractacion now had a permanent naval force whose sole duty was the escorting of treasure ships home from the Indies. It was called the "Armada de Averia" because its cost was defrayed by an assessment of "general average." Seville, for example, contributed 80,000 ducats a year for its maintenance. Moreover, the spy systems of both countries seem to have been so improved that each government was aware of the other's intentions. There was a notable lack of coördination between the English Admiralty and the fleet officers. The enemy was getting stronger and the Queen's government less determined. The old trick of waiting about the Western Islands for the plate fleets was out of date. Frobisher, who is often regarded as a mere bull-headed fighting-man with more beef than brains, had pointed out to the government the only way in which any success could now be won against the Dons. It was to victual the fleet for a year and send it out to attack Havana and the ships coming up from Nombre de Dios in the Yucatan Channel. They persisted, however, in sending out fleets to the Azores and the fleets returned with a flea in their ears. Sir Richard Grenville, who was in reality the sort of man Frobisher is often supposed to be, a man of infinite courage and no particular sense, had actually fought his *Revenge* against fifty-three Spanish sail. Lord Howard came home from that adventure without having achieved much. Even the Earl of Cumberland returned from his annual expedition rather the worse for wear. One astounding success the ships at the Western Islands had, but Frobisher was not concerned in the capture. Captain Robert Crosse fought and boarded the *Madre de Dios,*

a seven-decker, the largest vessel afloat, with a cargo valued at £150,000, and brought her into Plymouth.

The court intrigues which brought Sir Martin into the game again are complex. Sir Walter Raleigh was planning to do what Frobisher had recommended to Burghley—send a fleet to the Indies, to Havana or Panama. The contemporary authors disagree as to the conduct of Raleigh. Monson describes him as being recalled before the fleet left the Channel and the command devolved upon Frobisher. Camden gives a long story, saying that Raleigh went as far as Cape Finisterre and there discovered the plate fleets were not coming home that year. The fleet was divided. Frobisher took a few vessels and took station at St. Vincent while Sir John Borough and Captain Crosse went to the islands, and had the good fortune to capture the *Madre de Dios*. Frobisher was too weak to do anything but run away from superior forces, and returned without either plunder or glory. But the St. Vincent idea was sound. By keeping station off the Cape, Frobisher was carrying out one of Drake's schemes for crippling the Spanish naval forces. Had he been adequately supported by the rest of the English contingent the results of the expedition would have been far-reaching. But the privateers were not concerned with deep problems of naval science. They were out for loot, and loot was to be expected under Borough and Crosse at the Azores. They streamed away westward in obedience to the law of selfish expediency. And many of the complaints of Frobisher's strict discipline and difficult disposition may have been but a cloak to cover the fact that he was serving the Queen while the malcontents were serving their own material interests.

It must be confessed that the Queen's government was without any adequate policy. It was all very well to loot the galleons of their Indian treasure, but what

was needed was the destruction of the Spanish navy. That, indeed, was growing, no matter how many tons of pepper and spice were carried to London. Moreover, Philip had decided to establish a naval base close to England. He was supporting Philip de Lorraine, Duc de Mercoeur, head of the Catholics in Brittany, who was fighting the Protestant King of France. While the English navy, which had been evolved out of corsairs, was literally degenerating into corsairs again because of the lack of a unified command, Spain was seeking a base whence she could fling an army upon England with secrecy and swiftness. Burghley was old and Walsyngham had died in 1590. Elizabeth's foreign policy, instead of being knitted up by the success of the Fleet against the Armada, had slackened and fallen apart. The soldiers were working at court against "The Idolatry of Neptune." England, unknown to many, was in greater danger than ever, not from weakness, but because her resources were in divided hands. It was Spain's convulsive effort to recapture her dominant position in Europe, and only a few men like Drake, Raleigh, and Frobisher could see it. Drake had formulated a policy and Raleigh and Frobisher had indicated how that policy might be carried to a successful consummation. But the Queen, though she was enjoying the best health she had had since 1577, was unable to select and support a competent commander-in-chief on the sea.

In the autumn of 1592 Drake came up from Plymouth and at once the word went round that a scheme was afoot. He began, as we have seen, to "carry it away from them all." He found Sir Robert Cecil, son of old Burghley, gradually taking the reins from his father and not afraid of "the Idolatry of Neptune." The House of Lords was told that the King of Spain "for the better invading of England was planting him-

self in Brittany." Sir Robert Cecil preached from the same text in the House of Commons. In addition to menacing England "by having this province [of Brittany] he will keep us from traffic to Rochelle and Bordeaux."

Cecil touched the right chord. It would be said nowadays that "he was backing big business." No doubt he was. England was no longer an exclusively self-contained agricultural nation. She was already concerned with overseas markets. Eleven days after Cecil's speech the subsidy bill was passed. Drake and Hawkins received a warrant which, so to speak, was their death warrant, for neither of them returned from that last voyage to the Spanish Main.

Frobisher seems to have gone home while the courts argued over the cargo of the *Madre de Dios*. He certainly bought another estate with his share of the adventure. It was the Manor of Warmfield-cum-Heath and some long leases adjoining Whitwood. All that part of the West Riding is now given over to collieries. Frobisher went to the ends of the earth for gold and diamonds, while the real wealth of England was less than a mile away, underground.

It must have been a pleasant change from the *Garland* his ship on the St. Vincent Station. She was as slow as a hoy and a failure from the day of her launching. Sailors called her sarcastically the "Guardland," implying that she was more fitted to be a guardship like the *Bonevolia,* England's only galley, than a galleon of the Queen's navy. Young Martin was dead. Another nephew, Peter, somewhat of a waster, it would seem, was adopted as heir, and when Sir Martin sailed at the head of a fleet once more, young Peter went with him to learn the family business of serving the Queen.

The political atmosphere was now clearing. Elizabeth was no longer pretending that the country was not

in danger. Drake and Hawkins were held back from their proposed Panama expedition. Henry of France, aware that if Brittany fell into Spanish hands, England would be imperilled left its protection to the Queen. The Queen, assuming that a Protestant King of France would prevent a Catholic power occupying Brittany, had left its protection to him. The result was, of course, that Spain was now taking possession of the Peninsula. Morlaix, Quimper, and Blavet were in Spanish hands, and their latest advance had brought them to the Crozon Peninsula, a strong position projecting into the gulf in front of Brest.

Frobisher, until July, patrolled the Channel with six Queen's ships and two pinnaces to hold off reinforcements by sea. When the army was ready under Sir John and Sir Henry Norris, the Admiral escorted a fleet of eighty transports to Paimpol. Sir Thomas Baskerville attacked and captured Morlaix. The transports returned to England, and while the army advanced upon Brest from the land side, Frobisher took his warships round the coast and blockaded Brest from the sea. By October the siege guns had been landed from the ships and the position was attacked simultaneously from land and sea. No time was to be lost. An army under Don Juan d'Aquila was approaching. Norris and Frobisher determined upon a sudden assault from all sides simultaneously. Two thousand English under Sir John —"Black John Norris"—three thousand French under Marshall d'Aumont, three thousand cavalry patrolling the rear and four hundred volunteers—"gentlemen" —formed the allied force on shore.

The impetuous character of the military commander made it impossible for him to wait until the siege guns were in position to cover his advance. Several times the works were charged while Sir Martin was bombarding the western walls, without effecting a breach. The

army fired seven hundred rounds at the eastern curtain, but without result save to destroy the parapet. Captain Lyster led a desperate company of gentlemen to capture the place, sword in hand. Sir Thomas Baskerville, whom the Duke of Parma had publicly embraced during a peace parley at Sluys, as the bravest man he had ever met, led another company to Lyster's assistance and the foolhardy crowd found themselves hurled back over the parapet by the defenders, who had been unable to credit their eyes on beholding such reckless bravado. The result was four captains, an ensign, a volunteer, and eighteen soldiers killed and many wounded.

The supreme command being with the French, there were the inevitable arguments as to the conduct of the siege. Marshal d'Aumont, on receiving intelligence of the approach of d'Aquila, proposed that as the French were short of troops and the English almost at the end of their victuals, the siege should be raised. Black John Norris would not hear of it. The French commander was sick. Sir John suggested the command be turned over to himself. For three weeks the French had been mining the eastern side of the fort. D'Aumont resigned and Norris called the fleet in to make a final desperate attempt to carry the position.

At noon on the 7th of November the mine was fired and the massive stone curtain in front of the French blew up, leaving a good and adequate breach "such as a man might have ridden up on horseback." For four hours the assault continued. No quarter was asked or given. Frobisher, on the other side, had planted scaling ladders. At the head of his men, fighting like a lion, he was over the ramparts and driving the besieged inward. A Spanish soldier a few yards away fired his arquebus point blank at the Admiral, striking him on the hip. Frobisher, so far from falling, led his men in

one more rush and carried the west bastion. Down came the Spanish colours and up went the White Ensign with the plain red cross of Saint George. The seamen left a guard and dashed into the fort, taking the exhausted garrison in the rear. It was the old game of San Domingo and Cartagena all over again. The commander of the garrison, Don Tomas de Praxides, was dead in the breach, in the midst of a pile of the slain. The remainder, in accordance with the rules of war in that harsh time, were slaughtered as they attempted to escape.

It is a grim commentary upon the close watch the Queen kept upon her valiant soldiers and sailors, that the intrepid victors of Crozon Peninsula fought on empty bellies while stores in plenty decayed on the quays of Plymouth and Dartmouth. When there were stores there were no transports. When the transports were available no stores came to be loaded. Sir Martin, wounded and helpless on his bed on board the *Vanguard*, while the sappers were blowing up the fortress and Norris marching south to meet d'Aquila, dictated a report of the action and respectfully pleaded with the Council to let his men have some food. It begins in an abrupt but not inappropriate fashion:

> England. My humble duty my honourable good Lord, the 7th of this month by a battery undermining and a very dangerous assault we have taken this fort with the loss of—of our people but none of any account. They defended it very resolutely. And never asked for mercy. So they were all put to the sword saving five or six that hid themselves in the rocks. Many of them were slain with our cannon and great ordnance in defending the breach with their captain one Perithos. It was time for us to go through with it for Don John is advanced

within six leagues of our army with intent to have succoured them. Sir John Norris doth rise this day and doth march towards them to a place called old Croydon [Crozon]. We are about to get in our ordnance as fast as we can and so to make repair homewards. Sir John Norris would willingly have some five hundred of the sailors for his better strength against the day of meeting with Don John, which I would very willingly have done if we had victuals to continue our fleet here for the time. I was shot in with a bullet at the battery along the hucklebone. So I was driven to have an incision made to take out the bullet. So I am neither able to go [walk] or ride. And the mariners are very unwilling to go except I go with them myself. Yet if I find it to come to an extremity we will try what we are able. If we had victuals it were very easily done but here is none to be had. I have sent according to your honour's directions two ships to Plymouth and Dartmouth, we must presently sail away if they come not to us with victuals. This bearer is able to certify your honours with all things at large. So with my humble prayers to the Almighty for your increase in honour,

Croydon [Crozon] this VIIIth of November, 1594.

Your honour's most humble to command

P. S. Mr. Mondaie arrived the XXVIII of October at Brest and brought with him a thousand crowns for our victualling which was distributed among the ships.

MARTIN FROBISER.

It is worth noting, again, that this letter, with its recurring refrain "if we had the victuals," brought results. We have a letter from the Lords of the Council to Marmaduke Darrell, Surveyor-General of Victuals,

who had been with Drake to Lisbon in the same capacity. Mr. Darrell is informed that he must dispatch victualing ships at once. "You shall either have shipping sent for the rest or some reason yielded for the contrary." So, as Sir Martin with his smashed hucklebone and his hungry men were sailing towards Plymouth, the transports were sailing for Brest.

The surgeon had extracted the ball, as Frobisher had stated in his letter. But the clumsy fool had not cleaned the wound. So close had the Spanish soldier been to the Admiral that the cartridge wadding was carried into the hip bone with the bullet. The wound mortified on the way home and Frobisher, who had employed his scrivener during August in drawing up a long and complicated will, had a premonition that he was done. He was carried ashore in Plymouth, a dying man. One more honour came to him before the end. He received a letter from the Queen, written in her own hand but drafted by the careful Cecil. There is a certain irony in the dying Admiral hearing read out to him his sovereign's fear lest there be "any sudden mischief by fire or otherwise in our fleet under your charge." Not a word either about the failure of the victuals or about his own wound. Nevertheless, it was an autograph letter of the great Elizabeth. She was nearly sixty years old. She had been on the throne a long time. Perhaps the letter seems colder now than it did then:

Elizabeth R

> Trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well: We have seen your letter to our Treasurer and our Admiral, and thereby perceive your love of our service, also by others your own good carriage, whereby you have won yourself reputation; whereof, for that we imagine it will be comfort unto

you to understand we have thought it good to vouchsafe to take knowledge of it by our own handwriting.

We know you are sufficiently instructed from our Admiral, besides your own circumspection how to prevent any sudden mischief by fire or otherwise upon our fleet under your charge, and yet do we think it will work in you the more impression to be by ourself again remembered, who have observed by former experience that the Spaniards, for all their boast, will trust more to their devices than they dare indeed with force look upon you.

For the rest of my directions we leave them to such letters as you shall receive from our Council.

Given under our privie signet at our Mansion of Richmond the 14th of November in the thirty sixth year of our reign 1594.

L.S.

To our trustie and well beloved
Sir Martin Furbissher, Knight.

If doubt remains in the reader's mind that Elizabeth never had any clear conception in her mind as to what her officers and men went through in war, this letter should dispel it. Elizabeth evidently did not see the humour of warning a returning victorious squadron, most of which had been through the Armada action, against fire.

Two days after the receipt of the above letter Sir Martin was dead. In the register of St. Andrew's Church, Plymouth, the entry reads:

22. Nov. 1594. Sir Martyn Frobisher being wounded at the fort built against Brest by the Spanyards, deceased at Plymouth the 22 Novemb.,

whose entrails were here interred but his corpse were carried home to be buried in London.

And in the register of the Church of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, near where both Hawkins and Frobisher lodged in their more prosperous days, there is an entry in January 1595:

Sr. Martyn Ffurbusher, Knyght
14th day

CHAPTER XXII

CONCLUSION

HERE is a story that a brother officer on Frobisher's ship during his last commission called his attention to the doubtful character of his heir, young Peter Frobisher. The Admiral at that time must have been worth between thirty and forty thousand pounds, a comfortable fortune. Was it wise, this friend suggested, to leave so dubious a youth in possession? Frobisher's reply gives us a glimpse into his mentality.

"No," he said. "My will shall stand. It was gotten at sea; it will never thrive long on land."

It is said that young Peter turned out exactly as the older men suspected. But there must have been something in young Peter, son of brother John Frobisher, to engage the knight's affections. It was the custom of those days to leave one's estate to a man. Peter was the natural heir. Young Martin was dead. There came in order Dame Dorothy, Sir Martin's wife of a year or so, her daughter Mary, who was the widow of young Martin, and their daughter Dorothy. All women. Sir Martin's remark about his estate not lasting long on land may have been only a piece of sailor's fatalism. He was a remarkable exception to the common rule that a sailor leaves no will. He remembered every soul who had a claim on him. His sisters and their children are carefully provided for. His old servant,

William Haykes, "in recompence of his good and fayth-ful service to me heretofore done, one annuytie or yearelye rente of Six pounde thirteene shillinges and ffowre pence." One Mary Masterson, whose services are not mentioned specifically, gets eight pounds a year pension. His wife, Dame Dorothy, was wealthy and he gives her only all her personal property, the use of his house at Altofts, his beds and furniture out of Frobisher Hall, at Whitwood. Peter, of course, must live at Frboisher Hall, and if he can, have heirs to inherit the family name and property and the coat of arms Sir Martin obtained when he became a knight. Ermine on a fesse ingrayled between three griffons heads, erase sable, a greyhound cursant argent-coloured gules lined or.

It grows upon the investigator slowly that Frobisher, at fifty-six, was a fortunate and successful man. Granted that he unhappily lacked heirs of his body, he is a representative of the indomitable upward surge of the yeoman class in the reign of the last of the Tudors. Lord Howard of Effingham, Lord Sheffield, and the Earl of Cumberland were worthy representatives of the old order. They were intelligent aristocrats. Drake, Hawkins, and Frobisher came from the comfortable small-landed gentry. They were of the same social position in a changing world as William Shakespeare. Like him they made their own fortunes and established their families on a higher and more solid basis of material prosperity. The fact that these men are, to us, romantic figures, that they sailed to the Spanish Main and fought the Don, often obscures that fundamental quality of getting-on-in-the-world which is found in the English character through the centuries. Even in a day when men went to the stake and the torture chamber for a point of doctrine whose importance escapes our suppler minds, the English had a strong sense of

property. The suppression of the religious houses had set the minds of young men toward a life of action. The wars in the Low Countries, the tales of treasure to be looted on the seas, afforded them the opportunity to sunder the home ties of country life, which are very strong in England. Frobisher, and his contemporaries who had been in the Guinea trade, were the natural and inevitable leaders of this new army of eager truculent rovers. We see very clearly in Frobisher's career the gradual emergence of a sense of responsibility, the slow growth of understanding that seapower was not merely an obscure fight off the Norfolk coast for possession of a cromster-load of Flemish cloth, nor even a savage affray at the mouth of an African river for a score or two of slaves to sell in Rio Hacha. It is a long road from 1566, when Martin Frobisher and his crew were taken to London on a charge of piracy, to the assault of Crozon Fort. It is a road which symbolizes the evolution of English sea-power. Elizabeth is often represented as the presiding goddess of that sea-power. So far as we can judge from her instructions to her admirals, she had not the faintest conception of what they were doing. It was in her mind, after the destruction of the Armada, that Leicester and his army at Tilbury had saved the country. And even when she was at open war with the King of Spain, she was never at war with kingship, with aristocracy and the mediæval principle of gentle blood. This peculiar tinge in her mind modifies all her communications with the new class of men who were making the new England, consolidating the very realm over which she ruled. As for the common soldiers and sailors, it was rarely possible to extract from her any expressions which would indicate that she had any consciousness of them as human beings. Without the slightest personal fear herself, she showed the same indifference to the sufferings of others. For

her captains and admirals, she gave them much liberty, "disavowed them" as she would have said. Those who served her with fidelity sooner or later received their reward.

For Sir Martin she seems to have had a strong regard which never declined into favouritism or flared into petulant dislike. To her, the accomplished mistress of all the learning of the times, the daughter of kings, Frobisher was a rough diamond indeed. They were an effective contrast. If the Frobishers had mastered "the art of marrying well," Elizabeth's family seemed to have failed signally in that direction. Her father, in spite of all his attempts, never seems to have gotten the knack. The Queen herself never succeeded in making up her mind at all; and indeed she was no wife for any man. Frobisher's ambition, moreover, was one Elizabeth could understand. It was to serve Her Majesty, of course, but also to make money, to buy an estate, to rise in the world. It was no part of Frobisher's business, as he saw it, to urge the Queen to policies she only half comprehended. Drake's and Raleigh's grandiose schemes of imperial expansion she resisted unless they were sugared with rich spoils of gold and spices. Frobisher was never a man ahead of his time. His conviction that a navigable passage to India lay around the northern end of America was a reasonable and widely-held error. His original contribution to discovery was mutilated by the obsession of the adventurers, who financed his voyages, with mineral wealth. Had he received the support of the government on his third voyage to the exclusion of the hunt for gold ore, he would have been free to follow up his "Mistaken Strait," and would have entered that vast inland sea we now know as Hudson Bay. When it was finally understood that the ore was worthless, however, the scheme of exploration and the man who had pro-

jected it were dropped. One would have imagined, from the complaints of the investors, that Frobisher had promised wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. They deluded themselves from first to last. There is no record that Frobisher himself ever believed he had found gold. He had probably seen authentic gold-washings on the coast of Guinea.

Of his private character we have a little, but only a very little, upon which to build. He was illiterate and he was lacking in the winning personality which might have drawn a possible biographer to share his fortunes. That he had good friends we know. He remembers them in his will. He was of a choleric temper, strict in his conception of discipline. Yet of the love he bore his men we had witness in that early letter, whose grave and simple diction is in vivid contrast with the stilted and involved style he later deemed necessary when writing to the great. Of his affection for his family it shines through his will in a most remarkable way. When it is borne in mind that he had only known his wife some two years or so when he died, his loving care for her and her children is unusual. His own family had put him out into the world to sink or swim, and he might have been justified in neglecting them when he rose in the world.

It seems likely, however, that too much has been made of the occasional allusions to Frobisher's difficult temper. Is it seriously suggested that he was any more difficult to get on with than Sir Richard Grenville, for instance, or Sir Walter Raleigh? If the argument be modified to include only his colleagues, we have the distinct statement in rebuttal that Frobisher was chosen to go with Drake because he could take orders. His quarrel with Drake in 1588 did not arise from any professional jealousy. It was inspired, as is usual with untutored men, by several obscure and misunderstood

emotions. Frobisher had a very strong conviction as to what had happened that night off Portland. He was biting on something some one had reported as coming from Drake. The very thought of being cheated out of his share of plunder at such a time was too much for him. When his blood was heated, he was a Yorkshireman and Drake was a Devonman. Even in the nineteenth century the difference between a Yorkshireman and a Lancashire man is striking enough. Probably Drake's and Frobisher's pronunciations of English made it into two languages. Frobisher, it is recorded, "was full of strange oaths, jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel." He had a Celtic strain in him from his Welsh ancestors. He was descended from the de Scargills, Crusaders whose effigies on altar tombs still lie in Yorkshire churches. Yet Fuller, in his *Yorkshire Worthies,* complains that "the learned Mr. Carpenter in his Geography recounts him among the famous men of Devonshire."

"He was very valiant," says Thomas Fuller, "but withal harsh and violent (faults which may be dispensed with in his profession) and our chronicles loudly resound his signal services in eighty-eight, for which he was knighted."

He was very valiant. It is an epitaph Martin Frobisher would have approved and understood. He had no subtlety of character, but a very great valour. And he was one of the greatest of the Elizabethan seamen.

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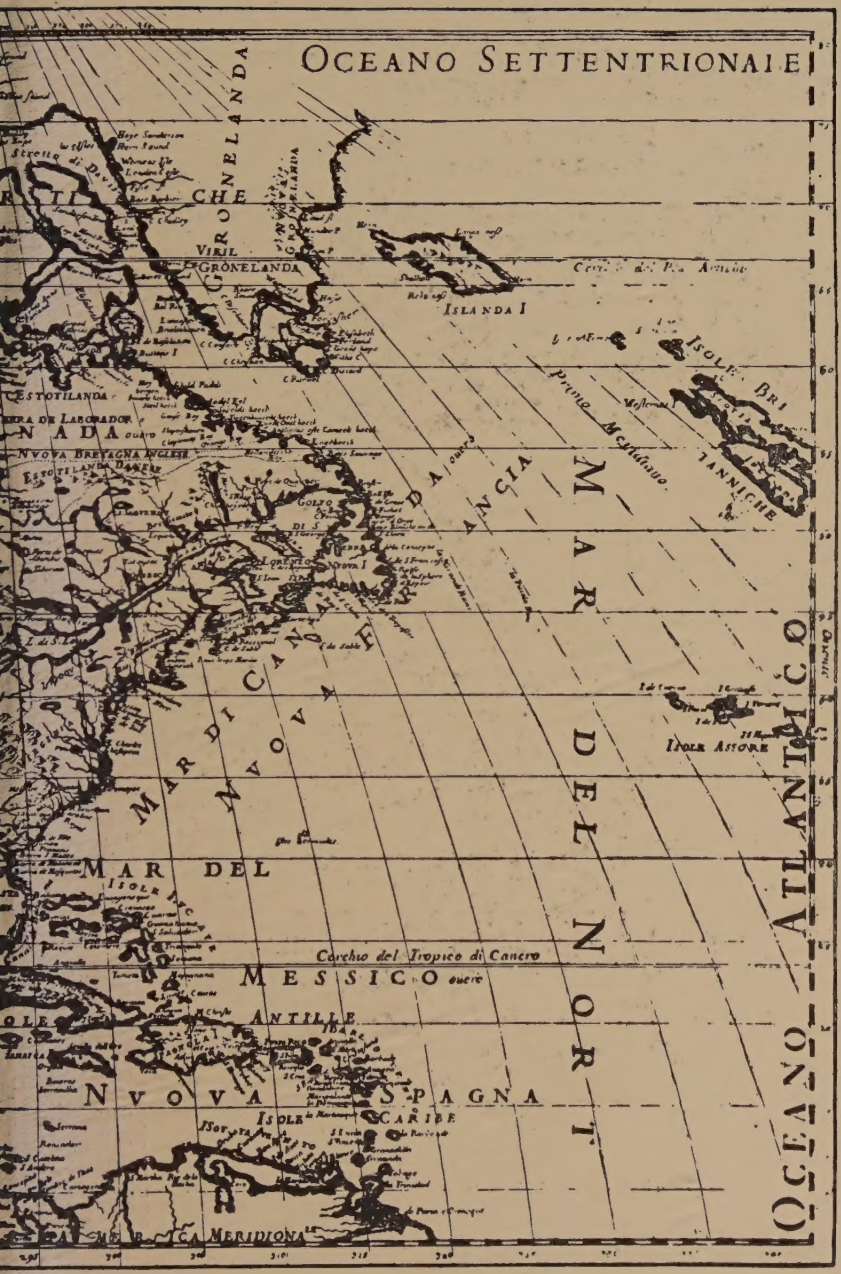
L AMERICA
SETTENTRIONALE
Nuovamente corretta et accresciuta secondo
le relationi piu moderne da GVGLIELMO
SANSONE Geografo di S.M. Christianiss.
In Roma in Casa di GIO GIACOMO DE
ROSSI in Roma nella sua
Stamperia alla Pace
L Anno 1667
MAR
DEL
SVD
MAR ROSSO
CALIFORNIA
GOLFO DI
MESSICO
TERRE



A Seventeenth-century Map
(*Showing Frobisher's Straits, in Greenland*)